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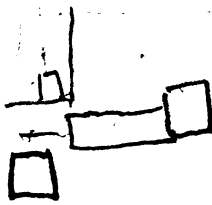


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GRUMMETT'S LOG.

LEAVES FROM

MY

LOG BOOK.

BY

FLEXIBLE GRUMMETT, P. M., *pseud.*

PHILADELPHIA:
CAREY, LEA & BLANCHARD.
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LEAVES FROM MY LOG-BOOK.

MY FIRST TRIP.

CHAPTER I.

1953-1
Who is there now living that remembers the regular East Indiaman of thirty or forty years ago, before the days of wet-docks and dry throats—when the newly arrived ship from coast and bay, or from the Celestial Empire of tea-plants and little shoes, was moored off Deptford, and her cabins, fore and aft, displayed a miscellaneous assemblage of manufactures equally to any bazaar in Calcutta? Ay, that was the time for doing business without the harassing restrictions of imposts and duties; for every Custom-House officer wore fog-spectacles, with bank-paper shades. There was nothing in those days of prosperity, to prevent fair traffic,—no prying into men's private concerns,—no turning out of dirty clothes-bags, nor ripping up of mattresses,—no trying the chests for

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false bottoms, nor hammering the beams to find secret lockers: every body could do a trifle in the small way; and if they were clumsy enough to lose their goods, why they were gone and there was an end of it. But now a poor fellow is either compelled to pay a heavy fine, or else get stowed away in prison, as if the liberty of the subject was to be treated no better than a bale of damaged slops.

It was a curious sight, though, in the dingy darkness amidst gun tackles and old stores, black-jacks and sea-biscuits, to see the resplendent treasures of oriental climes turned over by dirty hands, and often hurriedly concealed in some strange out of the way place. Waithman's shop can never produce such shawls as some I have seen hauled out of an old boot; nor can any jeweller show gems equal to many I have helped to take from the hollow leg of a mess-table, that screwed and unscrewed for the purpose. There were your real Bandannas and pullicats spread out on the breech of an 18-pounder, from which they had just been drawn, and where they had formed special good wadding to several well-filled cartridges of gunpowder-tea with canisters of sugar-candy instead of canister-shot. Rich spices of Araby—silks of Persia and China—cinnamon from Ceylon—ginghams and nankeens—hookahs and cheroots,—oh! it was a splendid display; many was the fine lady, ay, and even titled lady, who used to thread the mazes of the 'tween decks, passing along

through winding routes made by saltpetre-bags and logwood—empty casks and full bale—tar-buckets and pipes of wine, to get a first sight of the commodities. And when snugly housed in the cabin, oh! with what a delicious sort of mysterious *hocus-pocus* the goods were brought into daylight! No, there I am wrong; not into daylight, but into a dim twilight at noon-day,—the ports being all closed, and bull's-eyes not invented. But though dimness increased the delightful mystification of the thing, and the boy placed as a look-out at the cabin-door, to give notice of intrusion, whilst the traffic went on inside—all these circumstances gave additional value to the purchases. Ay, I could name many noble ladies whose beautifully-proportioned shoulders, and delicately-formed necks, owe their decorations to this species of free masonry; but forgive me, reader, for wandering; this was thirty years ago!

It was a remarkably fine ship in the service of the Honourable United Company of Merchants trading to the East Indies that I took my first trip to sea, but times have greatly changed since then; for now, what with officers on board, officers in the docks, and officers at the gates, the days of "free trade and sailors' rights" are wholly exploded, and it is hardly possible to smuggle even a half smoked cheroot.

I was, however, highly pleased, a short time since, by seeing a clever fellow play off an admirable trick. He was well loaded, no doubt, with counterbands, and he carried under his arm

a long box, of rather large dimensions. When he reached the monstrous gates (a sort of abortion of the Juggernaut pagoda) of the homeward-bound dock, the officer stopped him to look into the box, which Jack opened, with a knowing leer, and up reared the head of a snake: the officer started back, —the lid was down in an instant,—and Jack passed on without farther molestation.

I have already said it was in an East Indiaman I made my first trip, having been duly prepared for the voyage by the kind expression, that “the sea and the gallows refused nobody.” To be sure, I must own I was a sort of *pickled* dog, and I suppose it was that which gave me a liking for salt water. My father and mother, as well as the school-master, worked hard at me, but I preferred the *will of one* to the *rule of three*; and though the latter august personage generally administered daily as many stripes as there are in a Yankee’s ensign, yet, for some cause or other, (I always would have it that it was because I walked pigeon-toed,) learning never would stick by me. Nevertheless, old Wigsby, the domine, undertook to teach me the theory of navigation; and sorry work we made of it. That oracle of mariners, Hamilton Moore, was then the crack book, as Norie’s Epitome is now; but I much question whether Hamilton Moore was ever more cruelly mangled than by myself and teacher. Yet there was a never-failing resource—the questions were all worked to our hands, and it was the shortest and easiest way to copy all the figures; so that when the old blade told my parents

I was a proficient in the mystery, and received his five guineas fee, I knew just as much of the theory of navigation as I did of cuckoo-clock making. As for boxing the compass, I could much easier have boxed every boy in the school; and nobody will charge me, even to this day, with having discovered the longitude.

Never shall I forget the pride with which I first mounted a blue *long* coat, (I was very little bigger or taller than a good-sized monkey,) with black velvet cuffs and collar, glittering with bright gilt buttons, bearing the impress of a rampant lion carrying a crown, but which the wags of the Royal Navy declare is nothing more than a jackass rampant, running away with a kedgerees pot of rice. Then I had a belt round my body, and a dirk about the length of a ten-penny nail swinging by my side. In five minutes I was a man—had cut my play-things and school-fellows—set up a sweetheart and a 'bacco box—drank grog, and swore at the cat.

But my manhood received a sad check when I embarked at Northfleet, (where the ship was lying ready for a start,) and saw the midshipman's dark abode on the orlop-deck, bounded on the side by the stout planks, aft by a temporary bulk-head, and forward by the dirty cables,—the place of entrance being open to the square of the hatchway into the after-hold, which was then uncovered:—the yawning gulf swallowed up all my courage; may be, I didn't wish myself at home again, but I rather think I did.

My father was a strict moral character, and in our country village females of a certain class were unknown. I had scarcely ever witnessed such a spectacle as a thorough drunken man; for though there was an old shoemaker in the neighbourhood who had been a sailor, and loved a drop of comfort, yet he never got so top-heavy as to render him a brute. But now I was, in a moment, thrown into the very midst of drunkenness and debauchery; it was the day on which the crew received an advance of wages previous to sailing, and the ship was crowded with crimps and prostitutes, eager to carry off the money of the poor tars, who had become beastly intoxicated with the liquor these harpies had surreptitiously brought on board. It was, indeed, a most disgusting spectacle, and particularly so to a youth, who, however thoughtless, had been brought up free from debasing contamination, and never entertained a thought that such a scene could, by any possibility, exist.

I was soon destined to be the object of mirth, for a fat, frowsy creature, that would have made a suitable ornament for a Dutchman's rudder-head, and whose breathings were so strong of rum that they would have knocked down a grenadier—such a creature caught my diminutive body up in her arms, and dandled me like a baby, to the great humiliation of my long coat and dirk, but to the unrestrained delight of all who witnessed the transaction, and hailed her exploit with roars of real laughter. Oh, what a situation for an officer to

be in! I fairly let slip my manhood, and cried with vexation. Nevertheless, good frequently arises out of evil; for the hot, pestiferous breath from that foul volcano caused such a loathing in my very soul, as oftentimes to operate by way of restraint, when recollection revived the circumstances in my mind.

Many were the mortifications I endured; for there seemed to be a spirit of persecution amongst my new messmates, who had embarked a few weeks before me, and were better initiated; and deeply did I drink of the bitter draught of unavailing regret, at having quitted a home of peace and loveliness. At length, the foretop-sail was loosed and the jack hoisted forward; the passengers hastened on board—a detachment of troops was shipped—and we only waited for the captain's arriving, to slip the moorings and run for the Downs.

But I must not omit to mention an occurrence that took place at the embarkation of the soldiers: it caused me a wet eye then, and I have often thought of it since with feelings which I shall not attempt to describe.

Every passenger to and from Gravesend knows the India Arms at Northfleet. I have not seen it for many years, but it used to be quite a lone house on the bank of the river, with chalky-cliffs and wild scenery at the back of it, and a small jetty, covered with turfs, in the front, which served for the double purpose of esplanade and wharf; and there was a by-way from the London road for car-

riages, sweeping along the margin of the Thames, and at high water washing the hoofs of the horses. There were no trees nor gardens, but the house seemed as if it had been pitched on to the spot just as it stood, because something of the kind was wanting there.

It was an autumnal day—the heat of the sun was tempered by a delightful breeze that came down the river, stirring up the rippling stream, on which danced many a light vessel, with its bright colours flashing in the glorious rays. There were, also, several outward-bound ships speeding their course gallantly, with their expanded canvass swelling in the wind, whilst hope and enterprise animated each heart.

On the jetty, in front of the India Arms, the detachment of troops was drawn up ready for embarkation, and I was directed to take one of the boats on shore with a communication for the commanding officer. On landing, I found the soldiers had formed into a circle, in the centre of which stood their officers round a drum, whilst outside the circle, at a short distance, a number of women were assembled, in distinct groups, and all seemed eagerly watching the proceedings that were going on. At first I thought it might be a drum-head court-martial, and therefore kept aloof, especially as the soldiers appeared desirous of excluding all persons from entering the ring; but the pewter quart-pots that were handed from one to another, and as soon as empty were replenished, assured me

that my conjecture was wrong. Still there was an unusual decorum, and silence almost approaching to melancholy, which would have puzzled an older head than mine, and the women kept approaching stealthily towards the circle, and endeavouring to get a glimpse of what was passing within its bounds. Some of them were old and withered, as if inured to hard service; others were younger, and their apparel was more gay; but there was one about nineteen or twenty, who kept somewhat away from the rest, and though there was nothing particular in her dress to raise an idea that she had been accustomed to superior society, yet there was that in her countenance and in her look which is a never-failing test of having seen better days. She could not boast of beauty, or even prettiness, but there was a sweet innocency of expression, that was rendered still more interesting by the evident strugglings between hope and fear that were taking place in her bosom. She was in deep mourning, and her pale face assumed a paler hue, when contrasted with the black bonnet by which it was partly shaded.

The circle continued unbroken, except by the soldiers, who in turns quitted the ranks to advance to the centre; and I was surprised to hear the rattling of dice which were thrown on the drum-head, and the throws were frequently followed by a long drawing of the breath, as if it had been held for several minutes, and sometimes by an hysterical laugh of joyous certainty. Some had returned to their stations with a smile upon their faces; others

sad and dejected, and every moment seemed to produce an increased excitement.

At length a name was called, which for a short time remained unnoticed in the ranks, though the young female, who had unconsciously pressed closely to my side, drew a convulsive and quivering respiration; the colour rushed to her cheeks, and then retreating, left a more pallid hue, whilst her lips moved as if in secret but earnest prayer; but her eyes were directed towards a soldier especially neat in his undress; and as he turned his head he gave her one look which seemed to inspire hope, though his agitated features plainly showed that his distress was equal to her own.

He advanced to the centre, and this time a death-like silence prevailed amongst both women and men, whilst many an anxious gaze was directed at my companion, who had unknowingly laid her hand upon my shoulder, and, as it touched my cheek, no marble could be colder: it was a small, soft, fair hand, that had been unaccustomed to labour, and a plain gold ring was on the wedding finger. She shrunk or crouched a little when the soldier took the dice-box, but she remained breathless and motionless as he shook the dice and threw; again and again the operation was repeated—he heard the numbers, stood for a moment or two fixed like a statue, and then proudly returned to the ranks, whilst a murmur of compassion was echoed round the ring. The female gazed at him for a minute, but he did not turn his head; she ut-

tered a faint shriek, and fell lifeless at my feet. Her husband was permitted to fall out, and seated on the green sward, he supported his inanimate wife in his arms.

To me the scene was wholly inexplicable, but at the same time so touching, that the tears flowed plentifully from my eyes. "Poor thing," said one of the women, "she has no parents, and no home to go to; it will break her heart to part, and them not long married."

"But why need they part?" said I: "Surely the Captain will let her go with her husband, if she wishes it?"

The woman looked at me for a moment doubtfully: but seeing the tears trickling from my eyes, she exclaimed, "God bless you, young gentleman! I see you do not know what has been going on: the Captain cannot take her if he would."

"Not, take her?" said I; "what, does the uniform of the king part man and wife? Why cannot the Captain take her?"

"Because, sir," replied the woman, "there are only a certain number of us allowed to embark with each company on foreign service, and she has lost her chance; she'll not survive it long."

This explained it to me. They had been casting lots to ascertain who were to go, and who were to stay behind. By some it was treated as a matter of indifference, but those were generally the successful

parties; but to others it seemed the issue between life and death. This novel species of gambling still went on; but there, on the ground, overwhelmed with anguish, which his proud spirit vainly strove to repress, sat the wretched husband about to be bereaved of the fondly loved being who continued insensible in his arms. The sky was unusually clear, the day was delightfully lovely, and all inanimate nature was redolent of beauty; yet within this small space on which the sun was pouring out his golden radiance, oh, how many were the aching hearts and wounded spirits!

I was spared the pain of witnessing their separation; but some of the other women told me it was an agonizing scene; and the poor young creature kept lingering on the quay throughout the remainder of the day, and I do believe through the dreary night too, for at daylight she was still seated on the same spot, apparently in mute ungovernable despair. Her husband performed his duties firmly; but his eye would be ever wandering to the shore, and then a fevered flush came hurriedly over his face, and it was plain to be seen there was a desperate conflict in his breast. There was but little known of their history: the regiment had been quartered in an inland town; Jennings had joined it as a recruit whilst it lay there; but he was a perfect adept in all his duties, remarkably clean in his person, ready and willing at all times to perform an act of kindness to his comrades, studiously respectful to his officers; and yet with all

these qualities, he was a lonely, solitary man, and when off duty retired to some secret nook, where, unseen and unobserved, he brooded over his eventful destiny. His abilities, which gradually developed themselves, had caused him to obtain the rank of corporal. He had quitted the regiment for a short furlough; and when he returned he brought his wife with him—that gentle creature, unused to hardships, and from whom he had been compelled to tear himself away.

I honestly confess I expected he would have deserted during the night;—but no; at daybreak he was leaning over the hammock nettings, with his eyes fixed upon the shore; and so eagerly intent was his gaze, that he seemed insensible to all that was passing near him: from the time that darkness had veiled the face of creation he had never quitted that spot, and every one respected his sorrows too much to disturb him.

The morning passed on, and the passengers were attracted to the side to witness a spectacle of love and mute despair. Then there was a communing amongst them, and a pulling out of purses, in which the red gold glittered, and a reverend gentleman, who was going out as chaplain to the forces, went from one to another, receiving their donations, which he put into a leathern bag till it was swelled with its contents; and the Captain of Jennings's company called him aft, and one of the ladies—God bless her!—spoke kindly and encou-

ragingly to him, and tendered him the money as a subscription for his wife. At first he seemed inclined to reject the proffered gift, for he drew himself proudly erect, and a flush passed across his cheeks; but suddenly he bent down, touched the leathern bag without taking it, and then, in a forcible whisper, which was, however, clearly audible to all, he exclaimed, "The sum, lady?—the sum, the amount—say, lady, what is it?" Never shall I forget the intensity of his gaze at that moment; his very existence seemed to be suspended on the answer he was to receive; not a muscle of his countenance had motion; there was no respiration; his whole soul was absorbed in the result of his question. The lady looked a little alarmed at the vehemence of the application, and was compelled to inquire the exact amount of the clergyman, which as soon as the reverend gentleman had repeated, the young man fell upon his knees, raised his clasped hands to heaven, and fervently exclaimed, "Great God, I thank thee!" His hands were immediately spread over his eyes, whilst the heavy sobbings in his breast, and the moisture trickling through his fingers, evinced that nature had found relief in tears. The sum was sufficient to pay the passage out of his wife, and in a short time she was in his arms. Like a silly child as I was, I cried for very joy.

At last Captain W—— came on board; the moorings were slipped, the wind was fair, the bellying sails swelled in the breeze, the regimental

band struck up a brisk tune, and the stately vessel marched proudly on her way, gliding rapidly down the stream, and between the fertile shores on either side. Oh, with what astonishment did I see the immense spread of canvass that was set aloft and aloft; and my unpractised mind shrunk from the immensity of such wonderful mechanism!

Captain W—— was a tall, spare-topmast looking man, lady-like in appearance, but most gentlemanly in his manners; not much of a seaman, but an excellent navigator; he rather shunned than courted society, and his retiring habits obtained for him the character of being haughty; but those who were best acquainted with his merits declared he was a very pleasant, unassuming companion, with a mind richly stored and well-cultivated. The chief mate was a wild harum-scarum blade, whose head was literally cracked by a severe cut he had received from the sabre of that daring privateer's-man Surcouff, when the latter boarded and captured the Kent East Indiaman off the Sand Heads; indeed, but for the impenetrability of his skull, it must have been shattered to pieces—its thickness saved him. He was a rigid disciplinarian; at times a complete tartar, and not unfrequently committed acts of cruelty. Still there were some generous traits in his nature too; for he would at any time have risked his own life to save that of a fellow-creature, and a tale of distress found a ready passage to his heart. The purser, "auld Baldie Bruce," was a thorough "Scotch-

man," even to the freest translation of the word: he had hawk's eyes, a vulture's bill-shaped nose, a mouth like a maid's, (I mean a fish they catch in the North Sea,) and his speech had that peculiar twang with it which indicated a "mon frae the extreme North." The other officers were common-place characters, chiefly from the land of cakes, except the surgeon, who had practised in the neighbourhood of the great squares in London.

The passengers were many, indeed every part of the ship was crowded with them. We had a celebrated judge and his two daughters; officers of the army and navy; new-made writers and unfledged cadets; a dancing-master and his kit; two clergymen, one of them with a wife and two lovely daughters; three or four marriageable young ladies, going out on speculation; and several other persons whom I cannot at this moment call to recollection.

Onward we went, rattling away down the five-fathom channel, till we came to the flats; and here we found two newly-arrived Indiamen, backing and filling as they dropped up with the tide. One pilot was as surly an old curmudgeon as ever passed the Trinity Board; and when I mention the name of old S—— of Gravesend, whose nose resembled the sign of the red lion over the entrance to a brandy vault, there are those yet living who will remember the original.

"Grummet," said one of my messmates, who

was making his second voyage, "just ask the pilot the name of that ship dropping up, will you?"

In the innocency of my heart I complied, without reflecting, or, indeed, even knowing, that the old man was then in the most hazardous part of his navigation, and was trying to cross the flats with little water, to save the trouble of bringing up. I put the question to him, and the old sea-dragon slued round, gave me a hearty d—n, and no very gentle kick, in an inexpressible part. I certainly did not want bidding to give him a wide berth after that, but I did expect to meet with some commiseration from my messmates, who, however, instead of bestowing it, ridiculed me unmercifully for not understanding the trick. I learned discretion from experience, and never spoke to a pilot again whilst crossing the flats.

That night we anchored in Margate-roads, and the next day ran round the Foreland, and made a slant into the Downs, where the North Sea fleet were riding, having just come in for provisions and water. It was a noble sight to look at—three-deckers and two-deckers, frigates, and sloops, with their ensigns hoisted, and top-gallant yards crossed—barges and pinnaces flitting to and fro, whilst the hovelling boats under their three lugs were threading among the merchant ships (of which there was nearly a hundred sail waiting for convoy) on the look out for a job.

Towards evening the wind came down in snuffles, as if lashing itself into anger, and preparations

were made, by carrying the best bower in shore, and hauling up a range of the sheet cable, the anchor being all ready to let go.

The sun went down in a blood-red haze, and his broad disk had a gory and unnatural appearance, whilst its reflection on the broken water threw forth a sickening gleam, at which the feelings revolted; it was so much like a sea of blood. Before the two lights of the South Foreland sent forth their guiding radiance, the wind had shifted to the south-west, and its sudden gusts indicated the approaching gale. Signals were flying on board the men of war, guns were firing, and the crew of every ship was actively employed in making all snug to meet the fury of the storm. A flush of crimson still hung like a damask curtain over the land, to the westward, whilst above and to the eastward was a dense and pitchy darkness that seemed almost palpable; the Gull-stream light twinkled like a lone star upon the bosom of the troubled waters, when down came the gale, curling up the waves, and sweeping away their foam in sheets of misty whiteness, through which the sea-bird darted in exultation, and uttered his wild and piercing cry.

There was still a dark and hazy mist to the eastward; but through it might be seen the never-ceasing dashing of those boiling waves that rolled and tumbled, and hurled their white and hissing breakers to the heavens, which seemed to throw them back again with hideous and vengeful force; whilst the deafening roaring, as they tore up the

shifting quicksands, and scattered the glistening particles, was enough to appal the boldest heart. It was an altar that craved living sacrifice, where the bold and the resolute felt their hearts sink within them, for science was useless, and courage of no avail.

Flash after flash issued from these foaming billows, and the heavy report of the signal gun, proclaiming distress, came booming across the dark waters like death-warnings to the mariner; ship after ship drifted past us, some dragging their anchors, others, having got foul, had cut their cables; several were partially, and one wholly dismasted, and the yell of many a drowning wretch thrilled harshly upon the ear.

Our ship rode well—burying her heavy bows in the rolling waves, and scattering the spray over the forecastle into the waist—yet there stood two stout and sturdy seamen, with glittering axes over their shoulders, ready to cut, at a moment's warning from the pilot, who watched with untiring eye, as well knowing that the safety of several hundred human beings depended on his care and skill.

The whole was to me a spectacle of fearful wonder, and I looked with sickening sensations of horror, as old Harvey, the quarter-master, pointed out to me pieces of floating wreck, to which some hapless wretch was still clinging with desperate grasp, whilst the wild sea-birds skimmed around his head, and uttered their dissonant screams in his ears. The cries for help were heard amid the howlings of the gale—for the wise Creator has given to man,

in his perilous distress, a voice that is easily distinguishable from all other sounds—but no help could be afforded, and hundreds were hurled into one common grave.

The day dawned, and the gale blowed its might before the glories of the rising sun, as if in homage to its resplendent brightness; but that gale had revelled in the darkness of the night, smiting its victims with destruction and dismay—Death rode upon the winged blast, and his prey was buried in the great charnel-house of the deep. The shore was covered with wrecks, and the masts of several vessels appeared rising from the Goodwin-sands, but no soul was left alive to tell the tale.

By noon of that day every ship of the North Sea fleet was again “a-taunt-o,” with yards nicely squared, and sails fresh skinned; the ensign of St. George floated majestically from their peaks, and the long flowing pennants descended gracefully from the mast-head, showing Britain’s best bulwarks in all their pride and grandeur.

The wind backed round to the eastward, and the convoy signal to Portsmouth was hoisted by a diminutive little vessel, that would have stood between our fore and main masts; nevertheless, His Majesty’s brig *Monkey* was as much a man-of-war, as any first-rate in the service; and under her protection our anchor was weighed, and we made sail from the Downs.

The soldiers and cadets came creeping from below, (sure indications of fine weather,) the band

took their stations on the poop, the passengers looked toward the white cliffs that bound our happy isle, and not a few wished themselves in the meanest habitation on the shore, so fearfully had the gale of the night wrought upon their senses. For my own part, I would have given up every thing that had the lion-button, black velvet cuffs, dirk, and all, to have been safely under the lee of the great dining-table in the parlour at home; and I seriously purposed writing to my mother, to intercede in getting me away from a profession of such labour and peril. Oh how many good resolutions did I make, if I could once more have my feet on firm ground, and never again set them on board such a floating coffin!

However, away we went, bowling down Channel, the old pilot packing on every stitch she would carry, under the hope of saving the outward-bound fleet, Captain —— having promised him twenty guineas, as a present, if he could effect so desirable an object. Nor was he disappointed, for on running into Spithead the next morning, a fifty-gun ship was getting under way, and the Indiamen at the Motherbank were loosing their sails, to place themselves under her convoy.

I was walking the poop abaft, when old S—— beckoned me to him; but remembering the salutation he had last given me, I felt particularly shy at answering his signal, nor should have mustered sufficient courage, had there not been something that he meant for a smile playing upon his griffin-

like visage—"Young gentleman," said he, when I got within speaking distance, "young gentleman, you are but a greenhorn, and I'm sorry that I overhauled you so roughly—howsomever, I never like to part even with a child in anger, so shake hands and forget; you'll be none the worse for an old man's good will." I gave him my hand. "And, now," he continued, "take my advice: never play with a cartridge and a match in your hand—never ax useless questions of a pilot, for there's more flats nor one; and, above all, keep a bright eye upon seeming friends; if your messmates had not played you scurvily, you would not have felt an old man's toe in your starn—but God bless you, be a good lad, I shall live to see you a Captain yet."

I shook the gray-headed veteran heartily by the hand, for all animosity had subsided, and his few words made a deep impression on my mind. He went into the boat that was waiting for him alongside, and his place was supplied by a pilot from the Isle of Wight—old Dawes. Ay, there are many yet living who remember his hard-a-weather countenance, and his brown cheeks, through which the ruddy glow of health came peeping—his wife, too, his eight-day clock, as he used to call her—little did they then think they would ever have a baroness in their family; and they would have called every body *fudgers* that prophesied such a thing, particularly a French baroness; for if ever mortal detested the French, it was old Dawes. Yet it has come to pass, and the pretty bar-maid

of Portsmouth is now the *bar-oness* of *Feuchères*, with possessions enough to set up any petty king in Italy.

We joined the convoy, received our instructions, and, without bringing up, we threaded the Needles, and by evening were jogging along abreast the bill of Portland, that rises, in its wedge-like form, a sure land-mark to the homeward-bound mariner.

Off the Lizard the signal was made for the fleet to heave-to, and for the Captain of every ship to repair on board the Commodore. This was known to be preparatory to the parting with our pilots; and as it was the last link of communication with the shore, the rustling of paper, the scratching of pens, and the lighting of sealing wax, might have been witnessed in every part of the ship. Many a trembling hand betrayed the agitation of the writer—many a tear-drop mingled with the ink, and left its memorial on the fair sheet; and, in looking round that fleet, where hundreds were employed in the same pursuit, bidding a last adieu to relatives and friends, oh how many were the aching hearts and throbbing breasts!

The captains returned each to his respective command, the pilots gave up their charge, and, laden with heavy bags of letters, trimmed their little cutters to return to family and home. There were but few hearts in that whole fleet but had left some kindred or tie behind, and many were parted from all they loved on earth. The last

farewell memento had been given—fond remembrances of the past were busy in the mind, whilst doubts of the future cast a deeper gloom upon the already burdened spirit; and there was yet another pang to be endured.

The Commodore filled, and the fleet made sail, forming into three divisions. Still the land was in sight; and upon that rocky promontory, with its green summit, stood those two white towers which are admirably conspicuous by day, and resplendently brilliant when lighted up at night—generally the first discovered point of England's isle when homeward bound, and always the last from which the mariner takes his departure.

And now its altitude lessened on the horizon; objects were more dimly seen; till, at length, the whole faded away in the misty sky, and we were careering upon the open sea, without a single speck to break the curve that encircled us.

Numerous had been the watchers to catch a parting glimpse of their native land, who would never see it more. High and chivalrous enterprise—the prospects of fame and fortune—had urged many to abandon the delights of friendship and the sweets of love, to serve in that empire of the East, where life and death, luxury and privation, soft repose and severe duties, were constantly moving hand in hand, holding mysterious brotherhood.

And has it not always been so? Who can calculate the thousands of aspiring youth who have

seen those white cliffs melt away in the distant blue of the heavens, and who, in a few years, had either perished through the diseases incident to climate, or else had fallen in the field of battle, and had become the prey of the jackal or the tiger? .

But the land disappeared—the expanse of ocean, with its even rolling waves, surrounded us—the breeze was fresh and fair, cresting the billows with a feathery foam—and onward we moved, parting the waters hither and thither, and dashing along through the white and hissing spray, as if the majestic ship felt that she was throned on her own peculiar element.

“Once more upon the waters, but once more,
And the waves bound beneath me as a steed
That knows his rider.”

But there were some who looked delightedly upon the swelling sails, for their light frames were unequal to bear the cold chill of the keen northern blast, and they longed for the warm and sunny climes in which they had first drawn the breath of life. To them, England was the land of the stranger—the sustenance to prolong existence whilst on earth, and the heaven to which they hoped to have access when called hence by the angel of death, were of a different description and character to the present food and prospective eternal rest of the bold British islander. The milk-white turban, and the

loose flowing robe marked the Asiatic, and separated him from that social communion with Englishmen which almost every other foreigner enjoys. The lascars were returning to their country, and though considered a proscribed race of outcasts and renegades, yet the love of home kindled a warmth in their hearts, whilst joy sparkled in their mild but expressive eyes.

A few days after we had been at sea, one of those incidents occurred which generally make a deep impression on the mind of a seaman. During the gale in the Downs the wife of one of the soldiers was seized with the pains of child-birth, and whilst the elements were raging, and the ship rolled and plunged in ceaseless motion, a little helpless being was brought into the world.

There is, perhaps, nothing that more strongly marks the force of habit and the adjustment to circumstances than the different treatment which females meet with under the trying situation in which they are placed at the time of nature's suffering. I have known instances of women, on the march in an enemy's country, when the army was in full retreat, being delivered by the road-side, and in a few hours afterwards compelled to take their infants in their arms and follow the retiring troops.

The bed of the mother, in the present case was in a large chest appropriated to the use of the armorer for the ship's muskets and armorer's stores: it was lashed to strong cleats on the fore

orlop-deck to keep it from fetching away; and here, amidst tumult and noise, a male child was born.

"'Tis a rough night to be launched into a rugged world," said the chief mate when old Harvey had reported the birth to him.

"It is, sir," replied, the quarter-master; "but if the youngster should hereafter handle a marline-spike instead of a musket, why I'am thinking he'll take to a gale-o'-wind more natural like."

"True! old boy!" assented the chief mate; "but still I don't half like this casting of helpless infancy upon the very bosom of the tempest;—there's a something unnatural about it."

"And yet, sir, I should say it ensures our safety," rejoined the veteran: "for the merciful Creator has too much compassion to wreck a little creature like that, just fresh from his own hands."

The child lived and was thriving, and the worthy clergyman christened it after the name of the ship, conjoined with that of the father. But one night, (about ten days after our quitting the land, a piercing shriek was heard from below—another and another, wilder and wilder, followed:—the mother had awoke from a sound slumber and found the infant a corpse by her side. What had caused its death no one could explain; but there it lay, still and lifeless. It had entered upon existence amidst the raging fury of the storm, —it had departed in the quiet of the summer calm;—the winds were howling, and the sea was

roaring at its birth;—not a breath curled the blue wave—not a ripple was seen on the ocean when its spirit returned to HIM who gave it.

Old Harvey shook his head and walked forward to strike the bell six, but instantly returned aft again, and addressing the officer of the watch, exclaimed, "I've no wish to be croaking, sir, like a raven on a church steeple, but there's a sight by the belfry, sir, would throw the parson slap a-back with regard to the matter of what he calls superstition."

"What is it, Harvey?" inquired the officer; "surely Davy Jones can have nothing to do with an innocent infant!"

"I ar'n't learning enough to know the true bearings and distance of the thing," replied the veteran; "but this I'm sartin of,—there's a himp forward there, and many's the time I've seen 'em scudding about the decks and working all sorts of Tom Coxe's traverses when there was any mischief brewing."

"Let us see the creature," said the officer, walking forward with the old quarter-master close behind him, and having overheard the remarks, I placed myself alongside of Harvey. It was beautifully moonlight, and there, upon the arch of the belfry, like a graven image, stood an immense rat, undisturbed by our presence though we were at no great distance from it.

"A regular jackal, by all that's abominable," said the officer, looking about him for some mis-

sile to attack the intruder; but nothing lying convenient, he exclaimed, "Bear a hand, Harvey! whip a cutlass out of the capstain-head, and bring it here."

"I'm thinking it'll be of small use, sir," replied the quarter-master, hesitating to obey; "see, the creature has set his eyes upon you as if he knew your orders; and with humble submission, sir,—if it's the devil, you can't kill it; and if it's ounly a common rat, depend upon it he'll stick by the ship as long as there's a timber in her that's safe."

The officer impatiently ran aft to the capstan himself; but no sooner was his back turned, than the rat descended; old Harvey and I made way for him, and the creature walked deliberately to the gangway, and was on the point of going over the side, when the officer, having drawn out a cutlass, made a blow at him, but missed; the rat continued to descend, though a little quicker than before, slipped into the water, and we could plainly distinguish him swimming away towards another ship of the convoy, a South Sea-man, which lay becalmed about two cables' length on our beam.

"We're a doomed craft, sir," said Harvey, shaking his head: "them warmin never quits a ship whilst there's a plank to trust to."

"Silence!" cried the officer. "I thought, Harvey, you were too old a rough knot to heed such idle nonsense, and more especially to loose your tongue-tackle before the youngster there."

Harvey put his hand to his hat, as if somewhat abashed at his own misgivings in the presence of a youth, and shortly afterwards they both went on to the poop, leaving me to ruminate on what I had heard. That there was something meant more than met the ear, I was very certain, as also that the old quarter-master was apprehensive of a coming danger; but what it was, or to what extent, I was wholly ignorant, and every effort and conjecture did but embarrass me the more.

The following morning the carpenter's mates manufactured a small coffin for the body of the infant, into which it was put with two eighteen-pound shot, and holes were made to admit the water, for the purpose of sinking it.

The calm still continued; the sky was cloudless and bright; the setting sun threw his golden radiance over the face of the Atlantic; the waters were smooth and as clear as glass when the bell tolled for the funeral. The officers and passengers collected on the quarter-deck abaft the mainmast; the soldiers were drawn up along the gangway and waist, whilst the seamen assembled in promiscuous groups on the fore-castle and booms, and a few in the fore-rigging. The coffin, covered with a small union-jack, was placed on a grating at the gangway, extending over the side, and by it stood old Harvey and another quarter-master ready to launch the body overboard. A death-like silence prevailed as the reverend clergyman began the service, which

he read with more solemnity than I had ever heard it read before; and there was an impressive seriousness upon the countenance of every one, such as I had never previously witnessed on any occasion. At the words "We commit the body to the deep," the jack was removed, the inner part of the grating was raised, and the coffin slid off, falling with a loud splash upon the surface of the ocean. Then there arose a wild and yelling shriek of anguish—a shriek that carried its shuddering influence through every heart,—the mother had got conveyed to one of the ports, and had seen the descent of the coffin. For a moment or two afterwards, all was still, and the clergyman continued the service;—then again arose another shriek, so thrilling and fearful, that the minister stopped reading—the people huddled together, and old Harvey, looking over the side, exclaimed, "The deep gives back the dead—coffins war'n't made for ocean graves!"

I crept out through the quarter-deck port into the main-channel, and there I saw the coffin floating on the sea, at a few yards distant from the place where it must have fallen. The agonized mother was removed; the service was closed, and the nettings were crowded with spectators. At the expiration of about five minutes the coffin settled deeper and deeper in the water, then gradually sunk down into the transparent element, till it dwindled to a small white speck, and then wholly disappeared.

That night a light breeze sprang up, the scattered convoy formed into divisions and pursued their way. On the following day the wind freshened, the funeral was forgotten, and in the evening the band played to the sprightly dancers of every degree, from the quarter-deck to the fore-castle.

CHAPTER II.

“P.M.!” exclaim some of my readers; “What the deuce does he mean by P.M.? Pay Master?” No, reader; for though I pay as well as I can, yet times are hard, and, unfortunately for me, I have not even half-pay. “Is it Post-Master, then?” Wrong again, my friend: I have no post whatever—not so much as a bed-post, as I sleep upon a truckle. “It surely cannot be Prime Minister?” You are very right, it certainly is not; for I have passed the prime of life, the only prime I ever enjoyed. It is, however, in vain for you to puzzle yourself about it; you may go through nearly all the characters that the initials stand for, without ever thinking on “Passed Midshipman,” which the letters are actually designed to represent; such being the station I *enjoy* after twenty-eight years’ hard service.

But to return to my voyage. We left the ship—the good ship Brombie Castle, under the convoy

of the old Leopard, 50, careering on the ocean, with a fair wind, after burying in the bosom of the deep a young emblem of the frailty of human life. As communications had been signalized from the Commodore, that we should water at the Cape de Verd islands, preparations were made for that purpose; and as the breeze was fair, every ship crowded sail to make the best of it, so that we were sometimes rattling along at the rate of seven knots an hour, which, considering the dull sailors, was a very fair pace for a convoy.

We had been about three weeks at sea from the time of taking our departure, and were nearing our first port rapidly, the gale continuing to freshen, with remarkably smooth water, and a dim haze extending itself far in the distance, so as not to obscure the horizon altogether, but merely to circumscribe the boundary of sight. Over head the sky was beautifully clear, and the weather warm but temperate. The chief mate had the first watch, which was also mine; and as he sat on the flag-lockers on the break of the poop conversing with some of the passengers, I took my station a short distance abaft them, where I soon composed myself into a sound slumber. From this state I was aroused by hearing the bell strike five, and immediately hastened to the quarter-deck to join my brother midgy. The chief and fifth mates were in the cuddy laying down the ship's course upon the chart; old Harvey was at the con; and the look-outs at their respective sta-

tions were carefully peering around them. All else were stretched on the different parts of the deck asleep.

"Look over the gangway," said my companion, "and see how beautifully the water sparkles!"

I obeyed, and the whole ocean seemed to be in violent agitation, and where the short waves broke into foam throwing forth the most brilliant coruscations; at the same time there was a hissing bubbling noise, like a tide passing through some confined channel. I inquired from Harvey what it was that produced it.

"'Tis the ripple," replied the veteran; "and it is caused either by shoal water at no great distance, or else is a current setting in among the islands. For my part, I'm thinking we're carrying on where there are rocks and shoals hidden from every eye but that which seeth all things, and it seems to me to be a braving of His merciful protection to drag on the craft in the midst of hidden danger. Mr. — appears to be somewhat sensible of this, and therefore he has gone to prick her off. But yonder goes the Commodore, man-of-war-like, neck or nothing, as if his top-light was a star of safety to all who follow in his broad wake. But, holla! what's that?" exclaimed the old man, as a rather heavy lurch made us all catch hold of the ropes to keep from fetching way—the sea, notwithstanding the breeze, having hitherto been unusually smooth.

The chief mate ran hastily out of the cuddy, as

Harvey mounted the aftmost quarter-deck carronade, and shouted, "The whaler on the starboard bow has let fly of all, and is rounding to."

"She is going to sound," replied the officer; "get our deep-sea line passed along; rouse the watch, young gentleman, and bear a hand about it: we'll have a cast, too."

The whaler—the South Sea-man in the convoy to which the rat had swam—had lost her way, and as we passed her at some distance, there was a hollow rumbling noise, which sounded like a far-off shouting.

"The whaler is hailing us," exclaimed several of the watch, whom, in obedience to orders, we had roused into action.

"That is no earthly hail," said old Harvey, shaking his head; "it is the moaning of broken waters; we must be near the rocks."

Another heavy lurch washed the ranging swell over the gangways, and nearly filled the upper deck; the next moment the water was again smooth, and the ship rushing on her course with increased velocity. A sudden flash illuminated the atmosphere in the direction of the whaler, and the report of a gun was heard a few seconds afterwards;—another and another followed in quick succession. It was evident they had seen danger, and were warning the other ships.

"Starboard the helm—hard a starboard!" shouted the chief mate in a voice of thunder, through his speaking-trumpet. "Haul in the star-

board head braces—brace up the fore-yard—boatswain's mate, turn the hands up, and send every soul on deck."

The commands were obeyed almost as soon as given; the ship had come to the wind on the larboard tack, and was losing her way, when a heavy swell came raging towards us, and broke with tremendous violence against our larboard side, throwing up an immense weight of water, and tearing away every thing that was not well secured; at the same time a slight shock and a tremulous vibration was felt in every part of the ship.

"She strikes, sir!" exclaimed old Harvey from the poop; "and here are the rocks close aboard of us."

"Breakers on the weather bow!" resounded from the forecastle, and was followed by another heavy sea that swept the decks, and a shock more violent than the last ensued.

"What is the matter?" inquired the captain, rushing forward from his cabin with nothing on him but a shirt and a pair of flannel trousers.

"We're on the dangerous rocks, sir," replied the chief mate; "that d—d whaler saw the breakers, or must have struck and made no signal. Throw the head-yards slap back," he shouted through his trumpet, "and clear away the best bower. Down there, tierers, and see the cable clear."

The sails were thrown aback, and the vessel

gathering stern-way was paying round upon her heel, when a shock more violent than before threw every one who was not holding on prostrate upon the deck. Old Harvey had made his way into the main channel with a hand lead, and in a few minutes we heard his deep sonorous voice crying out, "Under a half five."

"Heave quick, my boy!" exclaimed the captain. "Silence, fore and aft!—be steady, men, and take your stations."

"All ready with the anchor," shouted the boatswain from the forecastle; and two of the stoutest hands were seen, one holding on the shank-painter, the other firmly grasping the stopper, whilst the boatswain himself, with a bright axe in his hand, stood ready to cut, in case of the turns getting jammed.

"Below there!" bellowed the chief mate down the main hatchway: "Is all clear with the cable?"

"Ay ay, sir," replied the man; "directly, sir; the sodgers have thrown all their duds into the heart of the tier, and be d—d to 'em, a set of know nothing babies."

"Not so much talk there," responded the chief mate; "but bear a hand with your duty, sir."

"By the er mar-ark five!" shouted old Harvey: "she's gathering way, sir."

"Hard a-port the helm!" exclaimed the chief mate; "haul in the larboard main and fore brace!"

"Hold all fast!" roared the captain; "stand by the anchor!"

"'Twill never bring her up, sir," said Harvey: "with this breeze, and all that canvas spread aloft, she'll walk off with her anchor as easy as I handle this lead."

"He is right, Captain W——," said the chief mate in a suppressed voice: our only chance is to try her upon the starboard tack, unless, indeed, you cut away the masts as soon as the anchor's gone."

This difference of opinion excited the utmost confusion amongst the officers, which was immediately communicated to the men. "Quarter less five," sung old Harvey, from the chains; and the ship, forging a-head again, struck heavily, making every thing quiver and reel with the concussion.

"Let go the anchor!" roared the captain. The shank-painter and stopper were cast off, and the crooked iron fell with a loud splash; whilst the cable flew out of the hawse-hole with a velocity that set all checks at defiance, and throwing the turns off the bitts, fairly ran out to the clinch.

"Axes and hatchets" were now shouted for, and the carpenter made deep gashes in the main-mast, just above the top-sail sheet bitts, whilst some of the best seamen cut away the lanyards of the rigging. But it was too late. The cable parted; and though the lofty mast with its ponderous

weight came crashing, thundering down, the ship paid off, and, striking with great force abaft, parted the tiller-ropes. Destitute of control, she rushed upon destruction; and a few minutes afterwards, whilst her stern was in five fathoms water, her bows were fast jammed between two sharp-pinnacled rocks that just raised their summits above the surface of the ocean.

A scene now presented itself which no language, however powerful, could adequately describe. The first shock, though but slight compared with those that followed, had yet so much of trembling agitation to the human frame, that it ran like an electric stroke through the ship, and every sleeper was aroused to something like a sense of danger. The succeeding shocks, and the fact that the ship was amongst broken water, being known below, men, women, and children, some partly dressed, and others with scarcely a garment to cover them, came scrambling up the hatchways, and collecting on the quarter-deck. The passengers left their cabins nearly in the same condition as the rest, and huddled together in the cuddy, the fearful apprehensions of death stifling the bashful modesty of young and beautiful females, who in their bed-dresses, clung for protection to any man that was nearest to them.

Hitherto, however, there had been no crying out—no shrieking as the mast fell; but, as if sensible that a noise would impede the operations of

the seamen, they had spoken their broken sentences in whispers. But when the ship rushed between the craggy mounds that held her fast, and as the wild sea beat over us, carrying off its victims, the yells of anguish and the howlings of despair were horrible indeed.

The judge and his daughters, with the clergyman and his family, were grouped together, and in the alarm for those whose lives were so precious to them, the parents seemed to have forgotten that there was a superintending Power on whose aid they might call in the season of danger, and on whose support they might rely when approaching the dark valley of the shadow of death.

From this stupor, however, they were awakened by the soldier Jennings, who had brought his wife into the cuddy, and kneeling down, poured forth his heart in earnest prayer; then giving her, as he possibly thought, a last embrace, he exhorted her to fortitude, and pointed out her generous benefactresses as the most proper objects for her care and attention.

The reverend clergyman's countenance beamed with gratification as he listened to the corporal, and instantly becoming sensible to his holy duties, he offered up his fervent petitions to the throne of Omnipotence for mercy. It was then that pious confidence rose superior to the fears of dissolution in the minister of peace; it was then he imparted the consolations of religion to the desponding mind, and cheered the spirit with prospects of succour.

here, or the hopes of a blessed immortality hereafter.

On the quarter-deck the soldiers seemed to be more terrified than their wives; and it was in vain that Jennings urged them to exertion. They suffered the waves to beat over or carry them off with the helplessness of infancy; and often they were seen momentarily struggling amidst the white foam of the dashing breakers that overwhelmed them for ever.

The fore-mast and mizen-mast had gone by the board, and only the bowsprit remained standing, which was crowded with human beings, as towards the extremity they were merely annoyed by the spray, without being much endangered from the body of the breakers. But even here numbers were falling, either pushed overboard by those who coveted their places, or else unable to keep their hold.

Amidst this trying situation, during the intervals of the rolling waves, we could see the bright and glorious heaven above us, glittering with its myriads of stars; we could distinguish the ships of the convoy, with their lights hoisted, floating in perfect safety at no great distance; and we could occasionally hear the signal guns of the Commodore to keep the fleet together.

Between the lulls the cutter and the jolly-boat had been lowered from the quarter-davits, and hauling upon the side that was least exposed, some of the ladies were placed in them, and they put

off from the ship. Attempts were made by several of the passengers and soldiers to force their way on board, but the chief mate and officers resolutely opposed them, and none was more active in his exertions than Corporal Jennings, who, with a cutlass in his hand, defended the gangway; and, though repeatedly washed away by the force of the waves, gallantly returned to his post as soon as their fury was spent.

The boats had not shoved off many minutes when the purser made his appearance on deck, bending beneath the weight of two bags of different dimensions, containing specie. The ship was quiet at the moment, and he walked deliberately across the quarter-deck, apparently unconscious of danger. The smaller bag he slung round his neck, passing the lanyard under his left arm, so that the money hung at his left side; the larger bag he grasped firmly in his hand, and approaching the captain, who stood holding on by the end of the main-sheet, that was well secured by the cleat, he respectfully told him "he was ready."

"Ready for what, Bruce?" exclaimed the captain, catching him by the arm.

"To gang ashore," replied the purser; "the dollars are aw in parfaict safety, and I understood the budge-row was in readiness to carry me to Calcutta!"

"Alas! my poor friend," said the captain, "has fear of losing your wealth so blighted reason? It is coming again! I feel her lifting;" and then, in

a voice that was heard above the roar of the approaching breaker, he exclaimed, "Hold on for your lives there, fore-and-aft."

Poor Bruce smiled in his commander's face as he heard the admonition, but seemed totally insensible as to its meaning. The captain clutched him tightly, and endeavoured to pass the end of the main-sheet round his body: but on came the rolling billow, dashing and tumbling with its vengeful force, and before the captain could accomplish his benevolent design, the raging breaker towered high above the stern, and bursting over the poop with its hissing roaring noise, swept every thing before it. The purser saw it coming, and turning a look of ghastly terror on the captain, exclaimed "You have betrayed me: the directors shall hear of this," the waters whirled him away. The weight of the dollars sunk him in the abyss, and he was seen no more.

The ship had hurled over considerably to starboard, and her stern had slued round so as to bring the weight of the breakers on the larboard quarter, and this enabled the officers and seamen to place the long-boat in such a position, that there was every fair probability of her being launched clear of the wreck. The sheep and cows that had been placed in it were turned overboard, and it was a melancholy sight to see the poor animals as they continued for some time swimming alongside, and uttering their plaintive cries for help.

It soon became evident by the settling down of

the stern, that the vessel was likely to separate in mid-ships, and the captain, at the imminent risk of his life, hastened to the cabin, to assist in removing those ladies who remained, to the fore-castle galley, where he hoped by barricading the openings, to keep out a great portion of the sea.

The judge and the worthy clergyman, with their families, attended most sedulously by the grateful Mrs. Jennings, had yielded up all hopes of being saved; and though the yearnings of human nature still clung to life, and the prospect of the bitterness of death was before them, they resigned themselves into the hands of that Being who, either in life or death, is alone worthy to be trusted.

Happily, the removal was effected without loss, and shortly afterwards the long-boat was lifted from the chocks and carried away light and clean from the wreck, the lashings having been previously cut for the purpose, and a scope of tow-line overhauled to give her plenty of drift.

Expectation of escape was now highly raised, and naturally, none was more rejoiced at it than myself. In the first tumult I was ranging about the decks, and should have been carried off by the boiling surge had not my arm been gripped by a hand that held me like a smith's vice, and a voice that I knew to be old Harvey's, sounded in my ears, amidst the bubbling of the waters that rolled over me, "Insatiate sea!" he exclaimed, "thou sparest neither sex nor years,—old age and infancy—

childhood or manhood, 'tis alike to thee: but thus I snatch away thy prey—may the Almighty forgive me the sins of my youth.” I could now stand upon my legs, and the kind-hearted old man lashed me in a position, where, sheltered from the fury of the breakers, though not from the numerous cold baths they showered down, I could witness almost every thing that passed. At the removal of the ladies, he again befriended me, and I was by his aid conducted to the fore-part of the ship, and again secured.

Preparations were made to bring the long-boat under the starboard bow, when several black specks were seen approaching broad on the starboard quarter, and there was a general cry that boats were coming to clear the wreck. The first that ~~run close to the fore-channels was our own cutter,~~ and we heard the gratifying intelligence that the ladies had been safely received on board the Lady Melville; whilst, to the lasting honour of the brave tars, they had immediately returned to render their assistance to their shipmates in distress. A cutter and a pinnace of the Lady Melville's lay off at a short distance on their oars, ready to come alongside as soon as the first boat had shoved off.

The remainder of the ladies, together with the judge and the clergyman, were lowered from the starboard fore-channels into the three boats successively, but no persuasion or promises could induce Mrs. Jennings to quit the ship whilst her

husband continued on board surrounded with peril.

The long-boat was now hauled under the bows, and the passengers, together with some seamen and soldiers, about eighty in the whole, made a hurried embarkation. Before, however, they could get oar, mast, or sail, a heavy breaker came rolling in: "Let go the hawser!" was the general cry, and the long-boat was carried away on the summit of the wave, amidst the white foam that hissed and danced around her. Away she went, and soon disappeared. At first it was feared that she had been overwhelmed by some sudden checking of the hawser, but she suddenly reappeared beyond the breakers, and then we were convinced that the hawser had either parted or been cut.

Other boats arrived from the different ships of the convoy, and my brave preserver, old Harvey, again assisted me into one of them, in which was Jennings and his wife, and in a short time we were safe away from the wreck. I turned to gaze upon the dark body, as it lay grinding upon the rocks, the stern sinking lower and lower, and the sea making a complete breach over every part of the deck, fore-and-aft. "It was but a few hours since," said the old quarter-master, "and the gallant ship was proudly breasting the sea, and carrying on till they made all sneer again,—now she is on her death-bed, and many who exulted in their manhood are already the prey of sharks. Look there!" continued the veteran, pointing to some-

thing which projected from the water a few fathoms astern of the boat, "the creatur is following us, but happily he will be disappointed of his prey."

An immense shark came up alongside, just beyond the blades of the oars, the splashing of which had possibly attracted him; and it was not without a feeling of horror that I contemplated the probability of the monster having torn and mangled the limbs of those whom I had seen alive and hearty the evening before; and I could not help shuddering, as my fancy drew the picture of a fellow-creature struggling at the same moment of time against the breakers, and resisting this ravening creature of the deep.

"He has mistaken the boat," said one of the rescued seamen; "it is our own cutter he wants, and she's been gone this hour.

"And what could he want with your cutter?" inquired the officer of the boat.

"The judge was in her, sir," replied the man, "and the lawyers always follow them on circuit."

This attempt at wit, from one who had just escaped the prospect of destruction, I felt was ill-timed; but it drew forth a hearty laugh from the boat's crew, which encouraged the man, and turning to a sergeant who sat beside him, he inquired, "I say, shipmate, isn't that a sodger's button sticking between his teeth?"

The shark ranged a-head of the boat and then

continued to play round us, till we got alongside of the Asia, on board of which ship we were most kindly received, and clothing and necessities supplied to those who required them.

At daylight every boat of the convoy was employed in taking people from the wreck, and bringing away every thing that could be rescued from the waves. This work continued during the morning, and as the ships had drifted considerably to leeward, signal was made to gather round the Commodore, when it was ascertained that the long-boat had not been picked up, and must have either foundered, or was still floating at the mercy of the winds. Directions were given for the best sailers to spread themselves on the wings of the convoy, to see if any traces of her could be discovered.

The Asia was one of the fastest ships in the fleet, and we stretched away to the westward for several miles, till a gun from the Commodore gave us notice to close. We had seen nothing of the boat, but we saw a strange schooner, Yankee-rigged, that was standing towards the rocks, and we hoped that if the long-boat was yet in existence, there would be a chance of her being picked up by the schooner, though the general idea was, that she had gone down, and every soul had perished.

We had scarcely wore ship for the purpose of joining the convoy, when a dense haze obscured

them from sight, and as evening was closing in fast, every officer was stationed in different parts to keep a look out. We had retraced about half our distance, and the passengers were conversing in melancholy mood upon the events of the past night, and the probable fate of the long-boat, when a noble Newfoundland dog, that had laid sleeping on the deck, suddenly raised his head, and gave a short sharp growl. The Captain was pacing to and fro with the chief mate, but stopped near the animal, and addressing it, said, "Halloo, Nep! what's the matter with you, old boy?"

The creature wagged his long bushy tail at hearing his master's voice, and then composed himself to slumber again; but in less than a minute he resumed his growling, and raised himself upon his fore-paws. "He hears something beyond our knowledge," exclaimed the Captain: "up, Nep, up my boy, and see to 'em!"

The animal at first rose lazily, stretching his limbs and shaking his coat, but in an instant he stood immoveable in the fixed attitude of attention, and then sprung away up the poop-ladder, running from side to side, and barking most vehemently, till at last he took his station to windward, and seemed perfectly furious. "We cannot be within six miles of the fleet," said the Captain, "and yet I am confident there is something near us. Weather cat-head there, do you see or hear any thing to windward?—Silence, Neptune—down, boy! down!" and the animal became per-

fectly tranquil, wagging his fine tail, and rubbing his head affectionately against his master's hand.

The officer on the look-out replied in the negative, as did also several others who had cautiously looked round and attentively listened. "I'll stake my existence on the dog's sagacity," said the captain, addressing the chief mate. "By heavens! it may be the missing boat!—haul up the main-sail and square the after-yards; keep her course, quarter-master, till I tell you to luff to the wind, and let there be silence fore-and-aft." The orders were immediately and punctually obeyed, and then the captain, patting the head of the huge animal, exclaimed, "Now, Nep, we must trust to you, old boy; look for 'em, Nep! seek 'em out!"

The dog whined with a languid playfulness, as if satisfied that he had awakened attention, when there arose a low, hollow moan, that seemed like a heavy groan issuing from the very bowels of the ocean. The ship, though moving through the water, was yet greatly retarded by the shivering of the after-sails, and the dashing noise occasioned by her velocity had ceased. "Fokstle, there," cried the captain, "do you see any thing on the weather-beam?"

"No, sir," replied the officer, "but there was a sound came down upon the wind, just now—though I fear—" he stopped short, but added in a whisper—"it was no living creature uttered such a groan as that!"

"The boat—the boat, Nep!" said the Captain, patting the dog; "look out for the boat, sir."

The animal raised his fore-paws, laid them on the rail, and crouching his head upon them, looked intently to windward, moving his ears rapidly. In a few seconds, he gave a shrill howl, and then barking, jumped down and fawned upon his master. "Lanterns in the fore and main rigging!" shouted the Captain; "clear away a gun- there, forward; and Mr. —, burn blue lights." Then, caressing the dog, he added, "There's my good Neptune, see to 'em, lad—look to 'em."

Neptune appeared to comprehend what was said to him, for, jumping on a coop, he snuffed the wind and fixed his eyes steadfastly about a point abaft the weather-beam. The lanterns were displayed, the blue lights sent forth their clear blaze, when again that hollow moan was heard, and the dog, with loud barking, leaped from his station, and fawned upon the Captain, who exclaimed, "Brace the yards sharp up—aboard main-tack, and, quarter-master, keep her clean full and by; at all events, we'll see the end of this!"

The sails were nicely trimmed, and the gallant ship upon a bow-line bent to the breeze, and dashed the spray from her bows. Blue lights were still burnt occasionally, the lanterns were shown abaft, and in half an hour the ship was hove in stays, and soon was reaching away on the starboard tack. In another half hour (for the Captain timed it with his watch) the mainsail was hauled up, and the

after-yards were in the act of being squared, when the officer at the weather cat-head exclaimed, "A boat to windward—broad on the weather-bow!"

Every eye was instantly directed towards the spot, and there was visible amidst the gloom a small dark speck; but at the same moment was heard the sound of many voices, simultaneously shouting, and warm congratulations were exchanged amongst all classes on the deck, as there now could be no doubt that it was the missing party. The main and mizen-topsails were thrown to the mast; the small cutter was lowered from the quarter and sent away to tow the long-boat alongside, and in another half-hour, seventy-six individuals, who, in all probability would have otherwise perished, were safe upon our decks. The long-boat was cast adrift—the sails were trimmed—guns were fired and answered by the Commodore, and in little more than an hour we passed within hail of him, and gave the intelligence of our having recovered the absentees.

That night the fleet lay-to, but as soon as the day dawned we again bore up for the island of St. Jago, and in the afternoon were all moored in Port Praya: the Commodore saluting the White Fort, received a return of the compliment, and an interchange of civilities was immediately commenced. I was particularly delighted with the scenery, as seen from the anchorage, so different to any thing I had before beheld; towering peaks and long

ridges lifted their dark forms against the clear light of the sky, and were finely contrasted with the bright green of the cocoa-nut trees near the landing. The White Fort on the hill, together with the small town, gave interest to the picture, and there was a degree of wild beauty in the spectacle that rendered it perfectly romantic. The water was so extremely clear and transparent, that the yellow sand at the bottom was distinctly visible in nine fathoms; and the piscatory tribe, from the huge shark to the small cat-fish, could be plainly distinguished as they moved about in search of prey.

As soon as the ships were moored, Captain W— came on board the *Asia*, and the interview with his passengers was of an extremely affecting nature. He was accompanied by an officer in the army on the staff, who was going round the fleet to muster the troops that were saved, for the purpose of ascertaining the number and names of those who would never pass muster again.

The soldiers rescued from the wreck were drawn up on the quarter-deck, and Captain W—, as well as the ladies and their parents, spoke highly of the brave and manly conduct of Corporal Jennings. The officer passed along the line, but made a sudden stand when he arrived at the spot where the Corporal had placed himself, and seemed to scan his features with a fixed attention. "Your face is familiar to me," said the Major, "yet I cannot

charge my recollection with the circumstances of any former meeting. Were you ever in the —st?"

"I was, Major," replied the Corporal, whilst a look of melancholy pleasure, as if awakened by some remembrance, passed hurriedly over his countenance.

"I certainly should know you," returned the Major; "yet I feel bewildered in my own thoughts —nay, nay, I do know you, you are——"

"Corporal Jennings," hastily answered the Corporal, interrupting him, as if desirous of preventing the utterance of his thoughts.

"I understand," said the Major, passing on, and continuing his inspection; but no sooner were the men dismissed, than the Corporal was sent for into the Captain's cabin, where the Major was waiting to receive him. He was soon afterwards joined by his wife, and they continued together for some time, whilst busy conjecture was most industriously employed on the quarter-deck to solve the riddle.

On quitting the cabin, the traces of deep emotion were evident in the faces of all three, and the tears were still trickling down the cheeks of the devoted wife. Jennings, at parting, saluted the officer with the most studied mark of military respect, and conducted his partner below.

"Poor fellow!" said the Major, musingly, as the Corporal disappeared, "your cup has been drugged with sorrow and misfortune to the very

brim." Then turning to the females, he added, gaily, "Ladies, I have attended to your recommendation, and your protégé is now a sergeant. Should his life be spared, you will one day see him—but no matter, he is an honest, brave-hearted fellow, and you may rely upon it, ladies, I shall not lose sight of him. As to his wife, I commend her to your patronage, ladies; I have known her under different circumstances to what she is placed in at present, and though now in an humble station, none need be ashamed of her companionship! But come, Captain W—, we have still other ships to visit, and, as the Commodore will not remain long in port, we shall have but little time to make arrangements. Ladies, your servant! Captain W— and myself will endeavour to provide the best accommodations for you that it is possible to obtain, and whilst I commiserate with you on the loss of your worldly goods, I am happy in being enabled to congratulate you on your present safety." And the gallant old Major took his departure, leaving the sergeant and his wife to form the groundworks of as many different tales as imagination could well revel in; but the most plausible was equally as wide of the truth as the most exaggerated.

In a few days the survivors from the wreck were distributed amongst the ships of the convoy, and contributions of clothing, &c., were plentifully supplied to all. Old Harvey and myself remained on board the Asia, as did also Jennings and

his wife, and the Judge and his family were received amongst the passengers. I was now treated with more attention and kindness than I had experienced in the Brombie Castle, and enjoyed greater happiness than I had known since leaving home.

Eight days after our arrival the signal was made to prepare for sailing, and it was generally understood that we were to go to sea the following day. About noon one of the ships, the Fortitude, which was lying outside of the rest, communicated the intelligence of three strange sail in the north-east, standing in for the Bay, and, shortly afterwards, that one of them was a ship of the line, and the other two apparently frigates.

As the strangers could only be seen from this outermost ship, on account of the east point of the land intercepting the sight, the Captain of the Leopard went in his barge on board of her, hailing us as he passed under our stern, and directing the chief officer to clear the decks so as to be ready for an enemy,

Scarcely had the Commodore set his feet on the Fortitude's gangway when up went the signal for every soul to repair on board their respective ships, which was repeated throughout the convoy, and enforced by the firing of guns. In another quarter of an hour the Fortitude hoisted "Prepare for battle," and immediately afterwards, "Get springs on your cables."

At this time there could not be less than eight hundred persons (including nearly the whole of the passengers) on shore from the different ships, and a boat was sent to direct all the officers and seamen to return on board without a moment's delay. Before, however, this could be effected, the strangers had rounded the point and come full into view. They had English ensigns and pennants flying, and looked extremely beautiful as they neared us under their courses and topsails, and each sail set with the utmost precision.

"They are friends after all," said the second officer, "and a rumpus has been kicked up for nothing. Shall we secure the quarter-deck guns again, sir?"

"Not yet," replied the chief officer, "though I fancy we shall have no use for them; but the men may go on with their work, and run to their quarters if they are wanted."

"I beg pardon, sir," said old Harvey, who had been looking at the strangers through the chief mate's glass,— "I beg pardon, sir, but with all due submission, I'm thinking that the colours are a mere sham; for if ever I saw French-rigged craft in my life, them there show the fashion. It's all well enough, sir, to hoist a bit of bunting, but if you will heed an old man, you'll double-shot the guns."

"What makes you think they are enemies?" inquired the officer.

"By the foot of the topsails, sir, and the cut of the jib," replied the veteran; "the canvass of them courses came out of no English dock-yard, and if you mind, sir, the line-of-battle-ship has no guns in the ports of the captain's cabin."

At this moment the Captain of the Leopard re-passed under our stern towards his own ship, and assured us that the strangers were French: at the same time directing the chief officer to open his fire upon them as soon as the guns could be brought to bear.

All was instantly bustle and preparation; the men went to their quarters, the soldiers were drawn up with their firelocks; but it happened that, except one lieutenant, there was no other officer of the army on board, and Sergeant Jennings was consequently second in command of the troops who were to act as marines.

Down came the enemy, the line-of-battle-ship leading, and the frigates following each other closely in her wake. The breeze was fresh, the sky was bright and clear, the water perfectly smooth, when the strangers, having successively brought the Fortitude on their beam, suddenly shifted their ensigns, and the tri-colour of France fluttered in the wind. In an instant red flames issued from their sides, and the murderous shower of iron was seen dancing along the surface of the water, and scattering the spray like a shoal of flying-fish with the albacore in chase.

Onward came the enemy, threading through the convoy and firing as fast as the men could load the guns, the whole of the ships that could get them within range returning the fire with a precision and steadiness that made almost every shot tell, and the sails of the frigates were flying away in long narrow shreds.

The position in which we were placed prevented our receiving, at first, more than a few straggling shot, but one of the frigates luffing up to pass across our stern, poured in a tremendous raking fire; and never shall I forget my sensations as the shot came through the after-windows, crashing and tearing the works away, and sweeping down many brave fellows along the whole range of the gun-deck, which was in some parts literally strewn with mangled bodies of the dead and dying. The frigate passed on and let go her anchor, with the intention of laying herself upon the Commodore's quarter; but the breeze being fresh, and the remnant of her sails flying in disorder, the anchor would not hold the ground, and she drifted down to the leeward, bringing up on the larboard bow of the Asia, and the starboard-beam of the Lady Melville. We hauled upon our spring, brought our broadside to bear, and the frigate found herself in a warm berth, from the well-directed guns of the two Indiamen, whilst the smoke became so thick and general that it was hardly possible to

see what was going on at any great distance from us.

My first impulse was to keep near old Harvey, who was steadily manœuvring two of the quarter-deck carronades, with as much coolness as if he was engaged upon the most ordinary job. "So, so, lads, don't be in a hurry," cried the veteran; "hand here that bunch of grapes—there, my boy, ram well home whilst I prick the cartridge—home! Man the tackles and run out the gun. Steady, so, lads—steady! Elevate the breech a little! High enough! Now, young gentleman," he continued, addressing himself to me, "cast your eye along that sight, d'ye mind, as soon as the smoke clears; the muzzle is point blank for the frigate's quarter deck: I always pay that mark of respect to the officers." I looked as he directed, as soon as an opportunity was afforded, though I could not but think the old man's mark of respect was a very equivocal one. "Did you ever see a gun better laid?" he inquired; and then added, "but, Lord love you, I'm an old fool; 'tis your first trip, and what can you know about the range of shot? Howsomever, Mr. Grummett, we must all live and larn, so lay hold of the match, just knock it on the priming, and then run and peep into the muzzle,—there'll be nothing to harm you, I'll be sworn." I did as I was desired with the match; the gun went off: what effect was produced it was impossible to tell; but I could not help feeling a

degree of repugnance at the probability of my having been instrumental to the destruction of human life. But this did not last long; for every sentiment of pity, every yearning of humanity gradually departed, and a raving sensation of cruel revenge assumed a dominion over my mind. I looked at the bleeding bodies of my countrymen; I viewed the spirit-stirring scene around me; fear was banished, and a total change in every emotion of my heart ensued. I was no longer inactive, but ranged about the decks, lending my aid wherever I supposed it was required. The men seemed delighted with my conduct, and we cheered each other in the work of carnage. And here it is worthy of remark that the bravest and the oldest seamen ever love to hear the voice of youth encouraging them in battle; they hail it as a promise for the future, that the glory of the British flag will remain unsullied and unsubdued.

The lieutenant of the army had been early wounded and carried below, and the command devolved upon Sergeant Jennings; but the men having no immediate call for the use of the small arms, had spread themselves to the great guns, and were rendering the utmost service to the seamen. Through the occasional breaks in the smoke we could see that the line-of-battle ship had brought up abreast the Leopard, and they were hotly engaged; nor was the situation of the Frenchman very desirable, for the Indiamen were lying

in positions to allow of three or four of them to pour in an annoying and destructive fire. The other frigate had boarded one of the largest ships of the fleet, but with what success we could not then tell.

Suddenly, our own immediate opponent swung round upon her heel, her cable having been shot through; and as she came drifting down upon us we had a fine opportunity of raking her. Old Harvey seemed to be in admirable glee as he saw his advantage, and pointed his gun; and, certainly, a better-directed broadside was never thrown in—the frigate's mizen-mast tottered for a few seconds, and then came crashing down, whilst our lads gave three hearty British cheers, which was echoed by every ship near us.

“She means to lay you aboard, sir,” cried Harvey; “the men are mustering on the gangways! Bear a hand, my boys, and stick some of their spoons in the wall—handle your tackle falls, men, and stand ready to run the gun out. Don’t be sky-larking with the cartridges there, ye monkey-faced rascals; but mind the ship’s duty, d’ye hear? or I shall give you a taste of some tarred-gingerbread!—to be sky-larking at a time like this, when a sheep’s head’s as good as the best man on board!”

At this moment the captain came alongside from the shore, and the men seemed to be inspired with fresh confidence from his presence. His beautiful

animal, Neptune, came bounding along the deck with his master, who gave directions that he should be immediately taken to a place of safety. Taking a keen, but rapid glance at the posture of the combatants, his mind instantly comprehended the whole, and turning to the chief mate, he deliberately issued his orders.

But the frigate came down too fast for the intended manœuvres, and the captain's voice, loud and clear was heard—"Small-arm men and boarders, on the larboard-bow to repel attack!—Cut—cut away the small bower!" At the same instant of time, Jennings and his soldiers, together with a number of seamen, were assembled at the appointed station, and the boatswain's mates, with heavy axes, cut through the cable, which flew out at the hawse-hole, and the ship dropped gradually to her best-bower. But the frigate's tattered sails, and her falling off before the wind, gave her a greater velocity than ourselves, and she came stem on her gib-boom, passing between our fore and main shrouds on the larboard side. In a few minutes our decks were filled with Frenchmen, and a most desperate affray ensued. Harvey had given me a loaded pistol and a short pike; with the first I sent a two-ounce ball through the head of a terrible-looking fellow, whose heavy cutlass was raised to strike my gallant old friend down; and with the other, I penetrated the bowels of a French soldier as he descended from the frigate's bowsprit, and his blood came pouring upon me in a dark thick

stream, as I endeavoured to disengage the weapon. At this moment, a heavy stunning blow fell upon my head—there was a ringing in my ears, and a sickness in my heart, and I was stretched insensibly along the gangway.

CHAPTER III.

My readers in my last paper left me in a state of insensibility; but as they are aware I have had plenty of time to recover, I shall without farther preface pursue my narrative.

From a state of torpid stupor I began gradually to be restored to consciousness; and though unable to move or to manifest any signs of returning animation, I was aware that my body was extended at full length, and my head was raised on the knees of some one who was seated on the deck for the purpose of supporting me. Dim recollections of the past came confusedly on my mind, and I could still hear the hollow sounds of cannonading at a distance, and a voice familiar to my ears was addressing a companion. The voice was Harvey's, and I could hear him say, "Well, brother, them there consarns always perplexed me, 'cause seeing why! I look upon mankind all the same as ship's stores, and I never could make it out that

the young and the vigorous should be expended whilst the aged and worn-out should be spared. Look at this fair-haired boy, who showed a stout heart in his little frame, here he lies, scratched out of the purser's books when just entering upon his mess, whilst I, like a piece of old junk unlaidd, must be twisted up again into grannies' knots. Oh! how often, I dare swear, has his poor mother combed those flaxen locks with pride, and smiled upon her boy! Now they are stained and clotted with blood, and she never will smile upon her child again! But where's your wife, sergeant? I know she will see the poor youth washed before he is launched into his ocean grave!"

"I am sure she would do so," replied a voice which I knew to be that of Jennings, "but she is on shore, and we are prisoners."

"'Tis the fortune of war," said Harvey; "but in the regard of the matter of bringing a wife to sea, for my part, I'd as soon see the devil in petticoats skulking about the decks. To be sure, brother, it's different with you sodgers on the shore; for I have been down in the Bay of Campeachy, where the Ingines have three or four wives; one carries his hammock, and another his kitchen gear, and all have something to do, whilst he marches with his gun and bow like a gentleman. So, I take it, a wife with you is no bad chance, to mount your knapsack occasionally, and cook your grub, after a long march. To be sure, brother, a sodger can have but one wife, and it has often

puzzled me to know what Solomon could do with so many of 'em; they must have been sadly in the way of working ship."

"I am not exactly qualified to speak personally of the advantages to be derived from a soldier having his wife with him on march," rejoined Jennings;—"women are, however, always useful in a regiment, particularly on foreign service; and where real affection is the ground-work of duty, the man and his wife must be of mutual comfort and help to each other."

"Well, I ar'n't much skilled in them there matters," said Harvey; "but, like many other things that comes across my fore-foot, or drifts athwart my hawse, it puzzles my edication a bit to understand how you, who seemed almost broken-hearted at parting with your consort at Norfleet, should now take it so easy, when mayhap you may get stowed away in a French prison, and she rig out her booms for Calcutta."

"It is certainly mortifying to think upon," returned Jennings, "but there is a vast difference, my worthy old friend. Had I parted from her in England, she, who had been bred tenderly under the eye of an indulgent parent, would have been left destitute and friendless. No soothing voice, with its soft and silvery accents, would have endeavoured to heal her wounded spirit—no generous hand would have been extended to bind up her broken heart."

"God help her!" ejaculated old Harvey, with

a sigh, "them are hard lines, messmate. So you think, mayhap, she is now under better convoy?"

"I do, most certainly," continued Jennings. "Happy she cannot be, for my fate is unknown to her; but befriended and protected she will be, for a virtuous woman loves virtue in her sex, and will shield it in the hour of danger or distress."

"Mayhap so, brother! mayhap so!" assented Harvey, "but then there's vartuous women enough in England—why not leave her among 'em at first?"

"My honest old friend," answered Jennings, "none but a tar, rocked upon the wild ocean from his childhood, could have asked such a question. In England, though not altogether unknown, she was despised by those who ought to have afforded her protection—she had neither home nor friend; now she will want neither! Mutual distress will excite mutual sympathy; she will tell her tale of sorrow, and meet with commiserating kindness! I know she is safe;—I know she will be provided for, and thus far I am content."

"Well, that's noble of you too, brother," said Harvey, shifting his seat, as if something incommoded him, "though I cannot exactly understand the true bearings of the thing. Halloo, Johnny!" he continued, in a louder voice, "will you just shove a bit of oakum, or a bunch o' yarns, atwixt the shackle and my leg?"

"Plait il, Monsieur!" said a voice, at a short distance above us.

"Placed ill! ay, to be sure it is," exclaimed the old quarter-master, "and chafes my ankle most damnably. God forgi' me for swearing over the corpse of this poor lad! Why, how the lubber looks at me! A bit of oakum, Johnny,—you'll find some down in the caulker's locker; or hand us a few yarns, I'll pick 'em myself, if you'll put it round the shackle; and I'll do as much for you some day."

"Je ne comprends pas," replied the voice.

"Paw be d—d," said old Harvey, testily, "didn't I tell you it was my ankle?"

Jennings now spoke in the French language, and earnestly requested that his companion's uneasiness and pain might be relieved; and his words conveyed to my mind the fact, that both were secured in irons, and stapled to the deck.

"There's a good *crapeau*," said the veteran, gratefully, as he received the rope-yarns, which, however, being thrown to him, fell upon my face. "That's a good *crapeau*! but you might have sung out, 'Stand from under,' and not hove 'em in the poor child's face; though, for the matter of that, it's all as one to him now. Eh!—hallo!—what's this?" he exclaimed, on carefully removing the yarns, and seeing that my eyes were open; "why, the boy is looking at me! Mr. Grummett, sir!"—he placed his hand over the seat of life—"and his heart beats too! he's alive, brother—he's alive! Ax the *crapeau* for a pannikin of water to wet his lips."

Jennings complied, but the Frenchman was much enraged at the epithet *crapeau*; and though he went to get the water, it was not without pouring out a torrent of abuse against the old quarter-master, upon whom, however, it was totally lost.

"That's a mighty civil fellow for a Frenchman, brother," said the old man, "but I hardly know whether to grieve or to rejoice for the poor lad! I say, Mr. Grummett; how do you feel yourself?" I put my hand to my head—"Ay, ay, I understand—they've given you red ropes for head-gear—and it's a bad place, too—but cheer up, heart! Here, drink a little water—'twould be none the worse for a dash of rum in it, but mayhap it's better as it is for you. Johnny, go and give the doctor a hail, and tell him to bring a bit of parcelling with him, will you?"

Jennings explained that I was one of the midshipmen of the captured ship, and the man wished to carry me to the surgeon; but this Harvey would by no means consent to: he declared his intention of washing the wound himself, and taking care of me, the Frenchman as pertinaciously insisting that the surgeon would not come, nor would he inform him. Harvey, however, was firm, and the Frenchman exclaimed, "*Quel un barbare!*"

"That's just it," said Old Harvey, "and I thank you, Johnny. Yes, yes, the barber must cut away these locks; but I'm a bit of a hand at hair cutting myself, mountseer; so if you'll just look in *your* ditty-bag, as was *mine* a little while ago, but I sup

pose has changed masters along with the craft—I'm saying, mountseer, if you'll overhaul the ditty-bag, you'll find a pair of scissors somewhere away in that latitude."

"By good fortune I have a pair about me," said the sergeant, producing them from his waistcoat pocket; and old Harvey, with much gentleness and feeling, began cutting away the hair from a severe cutlass wound in my head; and it was not without a sickly shudder that I saw my shorn locks, dagged with blood, lying on the deck. The old man then tore off a portion of his shirt sleeve, and carefully washed the place with the cold water that was left, and I felt greatly relieved and refreshed.

I was soon sufficiently recovered to examine the situation in which we were placed. I found that we were on the poop of the *Asia*, along with the survivors of the ship's company, who were either in irons or secured by stout lashings. The officers had been removed to the frigate, which lay upon our weather-beam, receiving the prisoners from her prize, and both ships were under easy sail, about a league outside of Port Praya Bay. The cannonading had ceased, except an occasional shot now and then; and the line-of-battle-ship and the other frigate, with their canvass flying in the utmost disorder: the former without her main-top-mast, and the latter without her bowsprit, were bearing up for their consort, with three large ships they had captured. The whole were soon collected together—the prisoners removed—the damages repaired,

as well as they possibly could be—to the great scandal of old Harvey, the French ensign was hoisted over the English in the prizes, and we made sail to the westward.

Myself, with Harvey and Jennings, had been removed to the frigate that captured us; my hat and shoes had been taken from me whilst I lay insensible on the deck; my jacket pleased one of the boys in the frigate, who gave me an old tattered one in exchange; and my whole wardrobe consisted of the few clothes I had on me.

The prisopers were closely confined down in the hold, which was in a very foul state, and the want of air and proper food made quick work in thinning their numbers. The officers were not so extremely restricted; a certain number were permitted to be on deck at a time; their allowance, though poorer than what they had been accustomed to, was nevertheless sufficient, and claret was far more abundant than water. My wound had been dressed by the French surgeon, and being free, I was enabled to afford many little indulgences to my preserver and friend, old Harvey, from my own allowance. The veteran, however, bore his misfortunes with great patience, but was sadly puzzled with the "outlandish lingo," as he termed it, of our captors.

The Captain of the frigate was a young man belonging to some favoured family, through whose interest he had obtained his command, for he was a perfect novice in nautical matters, and scarcely

knew the difference between a bowline-cringle and a marline-spike. He certainly did not want for personal courage, as he behaved with great gallantry during the action, but he was wholly unacquainted with naval tactics, and therefore unable to work the ship himself. The officers were also inexperienced, through the want of practice; and the task of carrying on the duty rested chiefly on the old boatswain, a Swede, who appointed two or three veteran seamen in each watch to instruct the lieutenants, and to look out that no mischief happened unawares. Such a state of service naturally produced insubordination and confusion; the men had no confidence in their superiors, and consequently treated them with but little respect. If the Captain issued an order, they looked to the boatswain to ratify it before it was executed; and the officers not knowing whether the command was obeyed properly or not, held scarcely any control over the conduct of the men. There was none of that beautiful order and regularity which I afterwards found on board ships of war belonging to England, where the voice of the commanding officer and the chirp of the boatswain's call are the only sounds heard,—but all were talking, shouting, singing out, or repeating orders, and running fore and aft, instead of remaining stationary at one particular post. Even the Indiamen I had been in were conducted with far more seamanship and good order.

La Corneille was a lovely ship, mounting 44

guns, and having a remarkably fine-looking crew, originally consisting of 320 men, including officers; but many had fallen in the fight. She sailed like a witch, going as fast under her two top-sails and jib as the prizes did with every sail set that could draw. Yet with all her fine ship's company, it was two days before a jury mizen-mast was completely rigged—a work I have seen done in an English frigate in little more than as many hours.

To the well-practised eye and knowledge of old Harvey it may easily be supposed that any thing lubberly performed was a never-ending source of vexation; but in this instance he consoled himself with the idea that they were Frenchmen, or, in his own idiom, *crapeaus*; “and what can be expected,” said the old man, “from officers that wear dungooree knee-breeches and fire-bucket boots?”

I have frequently heard it said, that “man is the creature of circumstances,” and in many instances, it, perhaps, is so; for my own part, though but a child, the vicissitudes I had undergone in my brief career had produced a very great change both in my mind and in my manners; instead of heedless light-hearted cheerfulness, I indulged in intense thinking, and avoided social converse except with my brave preserver, whose advice and whose maxims, though strangely mixed up with his profession, were the spontaneous utterances of an honest heart and upright mind; he was, in fact, the very beau-ideal of a sea-philosopher.

But why should I talk of sea-philosophers in the present day? Alas! the whole race is extinct; and instead of the tars who fought under Howe, Duncan, and Nelson, we have a sort of half-smoked, half steamed mariners, like a parcel of parboiled lobsters, fit for no station but that of ship's cook or cook's mate. Well! old Harvey is gone, or I am certain it would have been too much for his manly heart to have endured. But to proceed.

A few days after quitting Port Praya, a stranger hove in sight to windward, and the signal was made for *La Corneille* to go in chase. The frigate immediately braced sharp up and made sail, and we soon distinguished that the stranger was a British man-of-war brig of the first class, running down towards us. The French ships hoisted English colours, but the prizes, instead of showing the red ensign, displayed the flag of the East India Company; and the brig, unaccustomed to see it flying at sea, became suspicious, took in her studding-sails, hauled to the wind, and made the private signal, which of course the Frenchmen were unable to answer.

The mortification of the *Corneille's* captain was excessive, as he expected to decoy the brig down and make an easy capture; but now the saucy little craft hugged the wind as she reconnoitred and danced over the waters at a rate which plainly showed that she had long heels, and knew well how to use them. Still the *Corneille* con-

tinued the chase, and the English officers and seamen who were prisoners on board of her, and were permitted to be on deck, soon discovered that the brig was trying her speed upon a bowline, which having accomplished to his satisfaction, he hove in stays and went away on the opposite tack. The *Corneille* lost no time in going about, but her yards were swung round heavily in her endeavours to imitate the English style, and the commander of the brig was speedily made sensible of the character of the squadron, and the nature of the ships *under convoy*.

On seeing the brig tack, the French officers uttered many a "sacre" at the cowardice of the English for running away; not taking into consideration the disparity in the size and armament of the two vessels; but old Harvey, whose well-practised eye watched every manœuvre, whispered that "she was only trying the frigate hank for hank, and small as she was, the crapeaus would catch it yet."

For my own part, I could not conceive that such a diminutive craft, compared with the *Corneille*, would ever have the temerity to approach so formidable an antagonist; yet there was a degree of saucy daring about her as she rode gallantly over the blue waters with her long, low, snake-like hull below, and her white, sun-lit sails above, that gave her a very suspicious appearance, but presenting to the view of a seaman just the sort

of beautiful creation that his fancy or his sight loved to dwell upon.

For some time the frigate and the brig kept turning to windward, and it was evident, swift sailer as the former was, the latter had the advantage on a bowline, and there was no danger of her being captured. But the *Corneille* was getting away from her squadron and the prizes, and seeing the fruitlessness of farther chase, the line-of-battle ship made her signal to join and take her station.

Up went the frigate's helm, and up went the brig's, as if both rudders had been acted upon by the same tiller; and the prisoners could scarcely be restrained from expressing their admiration by a British cheer: but it was repressed, though the Frenchmen, mortified at seeing the little vessel give chase in her turn, ordered all the English seamen below. The officers, however, were suffered to remain; and highly delighted was every heart, when, in an instant, our pursuer was covered with an immense cloud of canvass, and he came tearing along like a race-horse, determined to win.

The *Corneille* shortened sail and came to the wind again under her three topsails, but still the brig bore down till within range of shot, when up went her foresail, and bang went a four-and-twenty pounder from a midships; the shot passed between the frigate's masts without doing any mischief, and fell a short distance to leeward. The smoke from the discharge partly concealed the brig from view; but, on its clearing away, she was dis-

covered on the same tack with the frigate, all her studding-sails down—even the booms rigged in. The Corneille fired her eighteens, but the shot fell short, which being perceived by her tiny antagonist, he ran down a little closer, and again sent a four-and-twenty pounder, that struck us in the quarter-gallery, knocking away the gingerbread, and crashing and tearing every thing to shreds, as it danced along the cabin gear—invaliding the furniture, and throwing the arms of the chairs round the legs of the table.

Never was vexation more strongly pictured upon a man's countenance than upon that of the Captain of the Corneille, when he reluctantly ordered his jib to be run up, and saw the ship's head paying off in obedience to the helm, for the purpose of joining the squadron, whilst her indefatigable little enemy kept within a *convenient* distance, and occasionally gave us a shot, (though most of them fell short,) till the frigate resumed her station, and each ship prepared to take a prize in tow for the double advantage of security and speed.

A lovely night succeeded to a gorgeous day: the moon-beams sported and glistened on the light ripple of the clear blue wave; the heavens were resplendent with that soft silvery brightness that spreads a halo round the contemplative mind of the seaman; the breeze just kept the heavy sails asleep; and all was so tranquilly serene, that even the watch conversed in whispers, as if fearful of breaking the quiet of the hour.

The brig continued to hover on our quarter, sometimes approaching very near, and then hauling off again, and occasionally adding lustre to the atmosphere by letting off rockets and burning blue lights, which created a suspicion that either she was the look-out from a fleet, or else had a consort cruising in the neighbourhood, to whom she was giving information that an enemy was in sight.

Nor was the suspicion unfounded, for the following morning two large ships were seen closing in, one upon each beam; and the brig, as if delighted at their approach, treated us with another twenty-four pound shot. We were towing the Asia at the time, and the report had not reached us, when we heard a cracking, splintering noise, and looking astern, beheld the Indiaman's main-topmast, with topsail, top-gallant-sail, royal, and studding-sails, hanging in wreck over the side.

"Hard-up and she cracks!" cried old Harvey, who had just made his appearance on deck; "my eyes, but the crapeaus are in for it now!"

The officer of the watch examined the strangers through his glass, and then called to the bluff old chief mate of the captured ship, and very politely requested him to try and make out what they were. T—— mounted the gun, and took a long, but breathless look—so eagerly intent was his gaze; he then returned the glass, slapped the Frenchman on the back, and exclaimed, winking at the same time at me, "A three-decker and a whacking frigate, by ——!"

The Lieutenant understood and could speak English tolerably well ; and the information came with such startling vehemence, that, in a moment, he ran—nay, almost flew to the companion, for the purpose of informing the Captain, just at the moment the latter was ascending the ladder, in nearly equal haste, to come on deck. The Lieutenant was a diminutive little fellow, rather bandy-legged, but the Captain was gigantic in frame and stature; and the former, in his hurry, not observing his commander coming up, dropped with his legs over the Captain's shoulders, who, without waiting to ascertain what caused the additional weight, appeared on the quarter-deck, carrying the Lieutenant like a flying griffin, to the great astonishment of his juniors and the seamen, but certainly to the unrestrained mirth of all hands who witnessed the strange spectacle. As for old T——, he laughed till his sides ached, particularly when the Captain pitched his burden on the drum-head of the capstan in the most uncereemonious manner, and by the contortions of his countenance, manifested strong feelings of disgust at such a gross *breach* of naval discipline right in his very face.

Old T——, who had produced the mischief, (for the Captain himself had heard the exclamation,) walked forward to the forecastle and explained to the boatswain the cause of the uproar; and the latter, though now under the French flag, had been too much accustomed to British tars not to relish the joke; at the same time, T—— admitted that

the ship he had called a three-decker was, in fact, nothing more than a small frigate, or probably only a sloop of war.

The Swede was called aft to the quarter-deck to give his opinion as to the nature and armament of the strangers, which, after a moment's look, he unhesitatingly did, by repeating that which he had but a few moments before received from the chief-mate, who apologized for the error he had made, by swearing that he never was accustomed to use any other glasses but Dollond's *fog-glass*.

The Captain was extremely angry at the trick which had been played, and poor T—— paid dearly for it in the end: he was ordered below into confinement, to the great gratification of the Lieutenant, but, I honestly believe, to the regret of the other officers, with whom the latter was no favourite. But other duties now occupied attention; for it was time to come to some decision, as the strange ships were nearing each other fast, and the French Commodore seemed puzzled how to act. At length, the prizes were cast off, and the men-of-war took their stations, so as to be ready to come to immediate action if they should be attacked.

The English squadron (now consisting of a forty-four gun frigate, an eight-and-twenty, and a man-of-war brig) joined company together; but the Frenchmen affected to ridicule the idea that so inferior a force would venture to give them battle. The English prisoners thought otherwise, for they were well convinced, that if the French frigates

could be detached from the line-of-battle ship, they would soon have the British ensign flying above the tri-colour.

The loss of the *Asia's* main-topmast had rendered her a dead drag upon the rest, and the *Cornelle* was not only again compelled to take her in tow, but all her boats were hoisted out and lowered down for the purpose of sending the prisoners on board of her, to get up another mast. The boats filled with English prisoners (excepting four French marines with their loaded muskets, two in the bows and two in the stern of each,) were veered astern by a hawser, sheered alongside the Indiaman, and having discharged their cargo, were again hauled up for a fresh draft. Willing to change the scene for a little while, I contrived to get into the pin-nace and stow myself snugly away amongst the seamen. We were just dropping alongside the *Asia*, when the man in the bow, in endeavouring to hook on with his boat-hook, suddenly, and, no doubt, intentionally, gave one of the marines a desperate shove with the inner end of it, that capsized the unfortunate *gulin* overboard. The bowman immediately shoved off to pick him up, and the other marines, in their eagerness to save a comrade, dropped their firelocks and got forward over the thwarts, when another, by *pure accident*, followed his companion. The ships were going at the rate of five knots through the water; the pin-nace was soon a cable's-length astern of the India-

man, and the Frenchmen were not yet rescued; indeed, one had wholly disappeared, and never rose again.

The Asia being in a direct line between the boat and the frigate, the latter did not at first observe what was going on, but the Indiaman giving a sheer to port, they saw the pinnace from the Corneille, and suspected that the prisoners had run away with her. The frigate, without casting off the tow, hauled up suddenly to the wind; but through the confusion that prevailed, and the little control that the officers had over the men, it was done in so lubberly a manner, that her sails took a-back, she got stern-way, and the Asia ran slap into her, carrying away the aftmost main shrouds, and tearing her mainsail into shreds scarcely large enough for baby-linen, whilst the jury-mizen-mast, a poor concern at first, fell over the quarter a complete wreck.

“Belay all that!” exclaimed a boatswain’s mate, “and take a severe turn round the hen-coop;” then seizing the stroke oar, he cried out—“Down, down, you lubberly warmint! coil yourselves away along the bottom of the boat in tiers,—bread-and-butter fashion; bear a hand, my worthies; now stretch out and make her fly as if the devil kicked her end-ways—and Mr. Grummett, if you please, sir, just lay hould o’ the tiller and keep her starn on to the enemy, and then they’ll have the smaller mark, in case they should fancy to make a target

on us. *Rusty tronkill*, you frog-eating sodger," observing one of the marines endeavouring to rise, "d'ye hear?—now, stretch out, lads."

I grasped the tiller, not, however, without some compunctious misgivings that I should be nearer to the enemy than any one else, and, consequently, more exposed to their fire; but still I took my seat: the men (as fine a boat's crew as ever I set my eyes on) bent to their oars, and away flew the pinnace through the yielding element like an arrow from a bow.

"Give way, my boys!" exclaimed the strokesman; "'The Cleopatra' (the other frigate) 'is rounding-to, and she'll pelt us with something a little harder than gooseberries;—as I hope to be made a warrant officer, there it comes.'"

The beautiful vessel came majestically to the wind, and presented her broadside towards us; in an instant, sheets of red flame issued from her guns, and we heard the hissing of the iron shower as it hurtled through the air above our heads, producing sensations in the human breast, which only those who have been placed in similar circumstances can form any adequate idea of.

"Well hove and strong," said the strokesman; "if any on ye are killed, sing out and let us know. As I hope to be made a *boasun*, (boatswain,) Mr. Grummett, but them there wor some'at more nor green peas. Howsomever, we're all safe this bout."

I watched the shot as they dropped into the wa-

ter ahead of us like a shoal of porpoises at play, skimming along and rebounding, scattering the spray hither and thither; but, in a few minutes, we were directly on the spot, which was as smooth as ever. "Well behaved, my men," I exclaimed, encouragingly; "there she dances, and our friends are carrying on to help us;—well behaved; stretch out, my boys!"

And they did stretch out, occasionally giving some poor hapless fellow a crack on the head with the loom of the oar, as he raised himself to catch a glimpse of what was passing. "Lay still, you lubber, do; I shall spring my paddle against your scone presently, and just now it's worth half a dozen such *skulls* as yourn."

"Well, Johnson," replied the other,—a landsman,—"*I must stretch myself a bit.*"

"You'd best not, you wagabone," replied the strokesman; "you're half a cable's length too long already, and if you goes to stretch yourself, we must tow you astarn. It's a coming again, Mr. Grummett; steer small, sir, as if you wor threading the devil's darning-needle; we're in better range of 'em now. Starboard a little, sir—shove her right into the wind's eye."

I sat with my back to the enemy, attending solely to my steering; but when I again heard the ominous sounds as they whistled in the breeze, I could not help glancing over my shoulder, and, on seeing the fierce flashes, my head sank down, and I felt a crouching sensation that, for the mo-

ment, rendered me unconscious, and I gave the boat a broad yaw.

“What lubber’s that catching crabs?” exclaimed the strokesman, as one of the oars caught aback in the water. “As I hope to be made a boatsun he deserves to have his grog stopped for a month.” A deep groan was the only reply, and another oar lay idly on the surface of the blue wave. The bow-man sat for an instant literally a headless trunk—a horrible spectacle to look at, and the man on the middle thwart raised the stump of a shattered arm as he deeply groaned; but his noble courage rising at the moment, he loudly cried, “Stretch out, my boys!” and both fell. The dead body was instantly consigned to the ocean, and two fresh hands supplied the places of those who had fallen.

“Mr. Grummet, will you lend us your neckerchief?” inquired the boatswain’s mate, still bending to his oar: “I wants it for a *turngut* for Bill Ransom’s arm—poor fellow,” he added with a faltering voice, “we’ve weathered many a bout together for years past, and now—— Well, no matter—— d—n the lubberly French! I suppose it was God’s will.”

The neckerchief was applied by way of tourniquet to the limb, the parts being twisted up taut by applying a spare tiller for a purchase by the people lying in the boat’s bottom. It was peculiarly gratifying to see that the English ships were crowding every stitch of canvass for our rescue,

the brig taking the lead; and well did the men in the boat struggle for promised liberty.

The Corneille had paid off before the wind, and got clear of the Indiaman; the seventy-four had gone to her assistance; and the Cleopatra, under her courses, topsails, and top-gallant sails, spanker and jib, was making a reach to windward on the larboard tack, for the purpose of cutting us off, or getting a few more shots at us. We were now about midway between the two squadrons, and the brig, with studding sails alow and aloft, was cracking on to get the Cleopatra within range of her long Billy. It certainly was an interesting and exciting spectacle, though I must own that I felt very little at ease as the single shots from the frigate came skipping and dancing past us, sometimes brushing the blades of the oars, at other times deafening the men by their close approximation to the ears, then splashing the spray in upon us, as if, in sportive pastime, they would conceal their real characters as messengers of death.

“Keep her head a couple o’ points more to port, sir,” said the strokesman: “it will widen our distance with the frigate, and give the brig a better chance of getting a slap at her. Bravo! my lads; together, and with a will!” A simultaneous cheer followed this appeal, and “Hurrah, hurrah!” was hurriedly shouted as their stout sinews plied the toilsome task.

“Hurrah again, boys!” exclaimed another; “and there goes the brig with sweet-lips.”

Wreaths of smoke were curling round the brig's bows, obscuring the hull, and rising above the ocean; but the shot fell at least two cables' length short, and the frigate in derision fired a gun to leeward.

"Now that's what I call uncivil," said the boatswain's mate, "and a wasteful expenditure of powder; but round she comes as I hope to have a warrant!—and, Mr. Grummett," he added with greater solemnity, "it isn't them who fires the gun, but He who directs the shot, that knows where away it will leave its wake: it may drop harmless in the ocean, or mayhap it may be stained with the red blood of you or me, like poor Bill Ransom there, who sits as quiet, though he must be in great pain—I say he sits as quiet as a marine over his grub waiting for the pipe to grog. Cheer up heart, Bill, we shall get the weather-gauge yet!"

The *Cleopatra* hove in stays, making a haul of all her yards at one time, and onward she came, stretching towards us at a rate that excited rather fearful expectations, but stirred up the spirit of the men to renewed exertions, and urged them to the extreme strength of desperation. "Well behaved, men!" exclaimed I, as the pinnacle rolled swiftly over the light swell, tracking her wake with foam. "Well behaved, men—give way together, and we shall hold her a tug yet."

"Keep her more to port, sir, if you please," said the strokesman, "for if she opens us upon her weather bow, fore-reaching withal, nothing will

save us. Our only hope is heading her; and as I hope to be a boasun, if we travel at this rate, but she'll find a starn chase a long chase. There goes her bow-gun, howsomever."

I did as I was requested, and instantly became sensible of the propriety of the course; for, though it carried us farther away from our friends, yet it also carried us ahead of our pursuer, and prevented him from bringing his guns to bear upon us; for the one he fired went very wide of the mark, and drew forth a shout of "hurrah!" from the boat's crew.

"By all the powers of Moll Kelly, but here's more boats running away!" exclaimed our Irish topman, directing our attention down to leeward, and we quickly discovered the boats of the seventy-four pulling directly in a slanting course to cut us off ahead.

"Is it running away they are, Paddy?" said the strokesman.

"Well, then, true for you, boy, they are running; but, by gosh, its after us, you thief o' the world!" He tossed his oar perpendicularly, and stood up in the boat, deliberating in his mind the best plan to pursue. "If we head this way much longer," continued he, talking to himself, "the line-o'-battle-ship's boats will cross our hawser, and we shall be done to a mortal sartainty; if we pull dead to windward we shall open the frigate's broadside, and them shots playing at ducks and drakes, like a witch on her skimmer, may stick

some poor fellow's spoon in the wall, or mayhap send us all to Davy Jones together. It's jammed like Jackson we are, and d—n the knife to cut the seizing."

"But the brig is coming down fast," said I; "and then, Joe, there's the frigates not far astern of her. Say but the word as to what we are to do; and you know there are willing hearts and ready hands to perform it."

"I know, I know, sir," replied the boatswain's mate: "I don't misdoubt the men, Mr. Grummett; but this is a box-the-compass sort of affair, that 'ud puzzle any man's edication. The parson used to read us a long yarn about the children of Israel getting land-locked in the wilderness, and working a traverse out of it at last; but then you see—give way, ye lubber, with that bow oar, and port a little, Mr. Grummett—you see the children of Israel—steady so, and stretch out, my lads—the children of Israel had forty years to do it in, and we haven't as many minutes. Give way together, men!"

Whilst speaking, his keen and observant eye was measuring the probable distance we should gain before the frigate could open her fire, and how near our friends could approach by that time. "Port a little more, Mr. Grummett," said he: "one of them boats has got a twelve-pounder in the bow, and I'll bet my six months' whack again a scupper nail its loaded with canister or musket-balls. That green barge is going two foot for our one, and overhauls us in grand style."

"But she has nothing but small arms, Joe," said I; "and you know we have four muskets."

"Only three, Mr. Grummett—only three," replied the strokesman: "the jolly took one along with him. But now it's come to this here point, boys, death or glory! We must stick her right away to windward, Mr. Grummett, and take our chance. Now, lads," as he dropped his oar in the water, and resumed his seat on the thwart, "now, lads, do your hardest."

The change in our course soon brought us broad upon the frigate's bows, and she opened her fire with every gun, as she could bring it to bear, whilst the seventy-four, observing the approach of the English squadron, made sail to succour the *Cleopatra*. The brig, seeing this manœuvre, took in her studding sails to wait for the English frigates, and hope of rescue died away in our hearts; indeed, I was upon the very point of speaking to Johnson as to the propriety of surrendering, when the long line of silvery, or rather pearly, brightness on the water astern of the brig, and the drooping of the sails of the frigates, proclaimed an approaching calm. In a few minutes afterwards, the French ships felt the loss of the breeze, and lay nearly motionless; the sea was like a highly polished mirror, smooth and glassy, or rather like a huge mass of quicksilver, undulating from some unseen motion below.

Our distance from the *Cleopatra*, and the smallness of the boat as an object for a mark, were good

securities against her shot, which, however, frequently dropped pretty close to us, splashing the water in our faces; but the green barge of the seventy-four was rapidly gaining on us, and the marines had more than once tried the range with their firelocks. Our three muskets were laid along the stern-sheets, and as I handled one of them, the boatswain's mate requested me "not to throw away a ball, but to order some of 'em below to secure the *jolly's* magazines."

The cartouch-boxes of the captured marines were quickly seized and handed aft, and even this our small means of defence had something cheering about it. The brig tried her long gun, and the shot went over the barge, which, for a moment, brought them to lay upon their oars; but they again resumed their task, and the musket-balls rattled about us, passing through the thin planking of the boat, splintering the oars, and in one or two instances peeling the outer bark off the men, but without doing any very material injury.

"As I hope to be a boason, that boat's coming up with us, hand over hand, Mr. Grummett," said the strokesman. "I've good reason to know we're within hail of their small arms by the love token they've giv me." He dropped his right hand to his knee, and a stream of blood instantly ran down; but raising it again, he pulled away, as if nothing had happened. "I say, Mr. Grummett, just poke one o' them there muskets at 'em; take a steady aim, and hould on behind."

I was much distressed to see the brave fellow was wounded; for I felt the loss of old Harvey, and Joe Johnson had in some measure supplied his place; but I had little time to think, and raising the butt of the firelock to my shoulder, I fired at our pursuers, and I felt a gloomy, diabolical satisfaction when the boatswain's mate exclaimed "Well aimed, Mr. Grummett! the bow-man has dropped his oar any how, and I'm thinking he'll not be in a hurry to toss his boat-hook again. Give 'em another peppercorn, sir; and here, you wagabone," he added to the man who lay extended in the bottom below him, "jump up by the side of the officer, and reload as fast as he fires! Hurrah! hurrah, men! stretch out and make her fly!"

The frigate had discontinued firing at the pinnacle, and I verily believe that every eye in both squadrons was directed at the contest going on between the boats. I discharged the muskets as quick as they were given to me, and was in the act of firing one when a sudden concussion to my whole frame and a stinging benumbing pain in my shoulder, made me imagine that the piece had burst; but, on examining, I found every part was uninjured, and, therefore, concluded that the charge was heavier than the others had been. I turned round to grasp another musket, when the old boatswain's mate exclaimed, in tones of kindness, "Sit down, Mr. Grummett; sit down, sir; I hope you're not much hurt. This is no child's play any how."

"I put my hand to my shoulder, and withdrew it again covered with blood; a ball had not only grazed my neck, but had actually torn away a portion of the flesh. I assured him that it was of no material consequence; and to prove it, sang out, as loud as I could, "Hurrah, men! hurrah!"

"Hurrah!" was responded with hearty good will; and on looking ahead, I saw that the boats from the English squadron were all in motion pulling away towards us, and the cheers of their crews sounded like sweet music to our ears. The men were informed of their advance, and again the "Hurrah!" was raised as the shattered oars bent to their strong arms. Several of my poor fellows, however, were desperately wounded; but they stifled their groans, though the boat's well was fast filling with blood.

"There goes the brig and the Cleopatra at long balls," said the strokesman, as the two vessels commenced a distant action. May I never get a warrant if the captain o' that craft is not a tar to the back-bone. We shall have hot work of it presently, Mr. Grummett, if we can but hould on till our friends come."

The sun had now risen high, and was pouring his burning rays upon us; and every now and then some of the poor wounded creatures would implore for water to quench their thirst, but, alas! we had none to give. 'A few more strokes, lads, and we are free," said I; "the barge has dropped

the chase, and the men are lying on their paddles."

"Hurrah, boys!—Pumps and cotton stockings instead of wooden shoes and iron shackles!" exclaimed the strokesman. "Beef from the sally-port, instead of soup-meagrim and frogs at Wardun! We're clear now, and I shall live to be a——"

He sprung upright from the thwart, his eyeballs seemed starting from their sockets, an instantaneous quivering agitated each limb, and shook the boat with its violence; and the gallant, daring seaman fell a corpse at my feet: a musket ball had passed through his noble heart.

In a few minutes more we were in the midst of the British boats, and hailed with three hearty cheers. They took us in tow; and we were soon alongside the brig as the nearest vessel.

CHAPTER IV.

It is the God of nature who has implanted the love of liberty in the breast of every living being his power has created. But it is man alone, of all his creatures, that with knowledge aforethought boldly hazards his life to procure or defend the blessings which freedom imparts. I blame not the citizen of the world, to whom all countries and all people are alike;—if he be honest, I respect his motives and his views; but, at the same time, I must claim for myself an equal right to enjoy my warm affection for my kindred and my adherence to my country. Selfish, indeed, must that man be who merely values his own personal freedom, and looks with cold indifference upon attempts to subjugate the land in which he first drew the breath of life. “But,” says the citizen of the world, “can that individual be really free who shackles his attachments to one particular spot?” I answer

that the affections of man cannot be shackled, for it is freedom alone that gives them worth and enhances the enjoyment in the heart.

“My country first, and then all human kind.”

In my last paper I proved that to escape restraint my gallant boat's crew risked existence; but this was not the only spur to exertion: they saw the British ensign flying—it spoke of HOME! of relatives! of friends!—and they ardently desired to have it once more waving above their heads, the proud emblem of England's best security. It was for this their blood was shed—it was for this the loud and animating cheer ascended to heaven's portal—it was through this noble feeling that worthy Joe Johnson was extended a lifeless corpse. Boy as I was I felt it; and in cherishing its influence imbibed a determined and fixed hostility to the enemies of my country and my king. Ever may the bright flag of England be the signal of our supremacy on the seas! Ever may our King be enthroned in the hearts of his people!—Hurrah!

My readers will remember that I closed my last by saying, “We were soon alongside the brig as the nearest vessel.” On ascending her gangway (and being the only officer I took the lead,) the seamen, observing the red stains on my shirt, jumped over the side to proffer their assistance; and this was done purely from humanity and a regard for gal-

lantry, for I had not the least vestige of a uniform about me. On the quarter-deck stood the Captain and first lieutenant; the rest were at their quarters. I took off my old woollen cap, and having given the usual salute, walked aft. "Well, my lad," said the Captain—a little, middle-aged man, with a sharp penetrating eye, and limbs that seemed peculiarly formed for active service—"Well, my lad, you brought them off admirably; and so well do I honour your courage, that I will immediately rate you midshipman on my books if you will sail with me. What do you say to it?—the 'Blaze-away' is not a craft to be despised," and he cast a triumphant look of satisfaction over his beautiful vessel.

I bowed with all the politeness I could muster, and requested attention to the wounded, and that my brave old boatswain's mate should have a seaman's burial. In the first part of my request, however, I had been already anticipated, for the wounded were then in the act of being carefully removed under the superintendence of the surgeon; and the latter part of it, I was assured, should be granted. I then commenced a short narrative of the occurrences that had taken place, and gave the names and armaments of the enemy's ships as well as the names and intended destinations of the prizes. The Captain, however, stopped me at the outset, examined my wounded neck, noticed the dressings on the cut in my head, and then ordered me to go with him to his cabin, where, with his

own hand, he washed the blood away, and applied some lint steeped in a liniment that almost immediately assuaged the pain. A glass of weak wine and water cleared the cobwebs from my throat, and I went through my narrative to his entire satisfaction, but without revealing the rank I had held in the Indiaman.

"Poor boy," said he, "within a few months you have seen vicissitudes enough to last for years. Are your parents alive?"

I answered that they were when I left England, and I hoped to enjoy the gratification of seeing them again at my return.

"Well, well, my lad, I hope so too," he quickly rejoined; "but what part of England do you hail from?"

I unhesitatingly told him, and also my name.

"Why that beats bannachor hollow!" said he—"Surely you are not the son of my old friend, Peter Grummett, of Grummett Cottage, in ——?"

I assured him I was the heir-apparent to that worthy individual, who had spared no expense to fit me out as midshipman, (for I felt my father's character for liberality was at stake.)

At this moment the first lieutenant put his head in at the cabin-door, and said, "The *Fortunée* has made the signal for all Captains, sir; the cutter is manned alongside, or will you have the Frenchman's pinnace, sir?"

"Oh, the pinnace, by all means, Mr. Tomkin," replied the Captain. "I must show his lordship

my young friend's prize; and, Mr. Grummett, you will accompany me. Steward! my dirk and cocked hat, for Lord Amelius must have every thing full fig on duty."

I endeavoured to excuse myself on account of my dress, or rather undress; but the Captain good-humouredly insisted upon my going just as I was; and besides the respect I bore for a commander in his Majesty's Navy, I had too recently found a friend in that commander not to obey him.

On reaching the quarter-deck I observed a main hatchway grating was laid abaft, covered over with a boat's sail, above which was spread the union-jack, whilst the bulk which they concealed, by its form, plainly indicated to my mind that a corpse was extended before me, and that corpse, I conjectured, was none other than the mortal remains of the intrepid Joe Johnson. Nor was I wrong: for, on lifting the sail, his well-remembered features, as they appeared in the last death-struggle, met my view, and the moisture was fast rushing from my eyes, when the Captain's "Bear a hand, Mr. Grummett!" reminded me that it was etiquette for me to be in the boat before him; and dropping the corner of the sail, I hastily descended the side. The boatswain's pipe immediately chirped loud and long, four boys handled the red ropes, and the Captain was instantly by my side. The coxswain waved his hand, and the pinnace shoved off till she was clear of the brig another wave, and down dropped the oars together in the water; the bowmen

tossed theirs for the moment, and then followed the example, and away we flew, the crew not a little pleased at having French timber under their feet. "She's a fine boat, Spindle," said the Captain; "and they brought her off gallantly."

"Yes, sir," replied the coxswain, who had been addressed, "it was a bould thing, sir; I never seed a much better since I was along with Lord Nelson off Toulon, and that, sir, was in the year of our Lord Hango Domino one thousand seventeen hundred and ninety-three; but he was then only plain Captain Nelson, in the old Eggs-and-bacon, (Agamemnon,) as we used to call her; he warn't even *benighted* then, sir."

"Well, Spindle, sheer us alongside in style," said the Captain; "give her plenty of room to come round, and let the Fortunées see a taste of your quality, Spindle."

"I wull, sir, I wull," returned the coxswain; "she shall have a reg'lar admiral's sheer, and Lord Amelia himself never shall have a better."

In a few minutes the coxswain's hand was thrown aloft, and the two bowmen tossed their oars, laid them in, and each stood erect forward with their boat-hooks poised perpendicularly in their hands. A long shrill piping was heard on board the frigate, as the pinnace came sweeping round; the coxswain again threw up his fin, and every oar was laid in together, whilst the boat was so correctly steered that her stern-sheets came immediately under the gangway steps, up which the Cap-

tain of the brig ascended, and then beckoned me to follow. I lost no time in attempting compliance; but before quitting the pinnacle, the boatswain again winded his call, and the side-ropes, covered with red baize, were unshipped from their becketts, nor did the side-boys seem at all inclined to hand over any others. "Come up, Mr. Grummett," said the Captain of the brig, returning to the gangway; but seeing that the side-ropes were gone, he threw over the end of the main clew garnet, and took a turn round a belaying pin, by which means I contrived to get on deck, where a scene presented itself of a truly laughable character. A short, stout, thick-set man, in an old uniform coat, a coloured silk handkerchief round his neck, and his legs cased in military boots, with large staring eyes, and his face as red as scarlet, was applying his foot to the unmentionable part of a young midshipman, who was scudding forward to escape his wrath, but was hotly pursued by the person I have described. "It is curious," thought I, "that the boatswain should presume to inflict such a chastisement on a quarter-deck officer." The stout old man, however, chased the youngster along the gangway, across the fore-castle, and back again, along the other gangway, to the quarter-deck, where he stopped, completely out of breath, which as soon as he partially recovered, he exclaimed, "Now, sir, remember—(puffing)—that whatever rating a man may have, he'll want—(puffing)—something to get up the side by, if it is

only a rope-yarn." All this correction then was through me, or rather through the neglect of not seeing the white or common-use ropes shipped for me, but why the boatswain should be the punisher was a puzzler. "Captain Dashall," exclaimed he, blowing like a grampus, "I ought to apologize for my want of—(pu-u-ffe)—attention to you, but really, sir, as you know—(pu-u-ffe)—these youngsters try one's—(pu-u-ffe)—patience beyond endurance." Then turning to me—"I'm sorry, my lad—(puffe)—that so much neglect was shown you, for you merited—(puff)—better treatment. But walk below, Captain Dashall; and Mr. Handsail," addressing, as I supposed, the first lieutenant, "when Captain Rosewater comes on board, hand him down into the cabin. Captain Dashall, I wait upon you."

"Allow me, my lord"—(whew-ew, thought I)—"first of all to introduce my young friend to you: he was midshipman of one of the captured Indiamen, my lord, and as you see, has met with but rough treatment." Then taking me by the hand, and presenting me, he continued—"Lord Beaumscratch, Mr. Grummett,—Mr. Grummett, Lord Beaumscratch." My woollen cap was again removed, and I felt extremely awkward, more especially as I could twig the youngsters enjoying a grand quiz at my expense. Nevertheless, I endeavoured to acquit myself to the best of my ability, and was requested to follow the two naval heroes down below.

On entering the cabin I was assailed by two pampered but handsome French dogs, rather old, but with long silky hair and ears that swept the decks; whilst a third, apparently still more advanced in years, was *couchant* in a wicker-basket nearly filled with cotton down, and arranged in delicate order. "Taisez vous donc, Mignon! Abah, Abah, Bellaute!" said his lordship to his pets, and the animals immediately desisted barking to frisk round their indulgent master.

I was required to repeat all the particulars which I had previously made Captain Dashall acquainted with, and received some warm commendations from Lord Amelius at the conclusion. As far as my small knowledge of seamanship went, I described the state of the French squadron, and the condition of the prizes, together with the want of order on board the *Corneille*.

"Captain Rosewater, to wait on your lordship," said a Lieutenant at the cabin-door, hat in hand, and the Captain entered. He was rather below the middle stature, well made, *florid*—nay, even *roseate* complexion, (Reader, he painted,) stylishly dressed, and braced sharp up round the waist, (or rather, *hove in stays*.) "Lord Amelius Beaum-scratch, I am your devoted," he simperingly said, at the same time tucking a neat gold-laced cocked hat under his arm—"Captain Dashall, your servant;" and then applying a quizzing-glass set in massive gold to his eye, he inspected me from head to toe.

"Captain Rosewater," said his lordship, "this young gentleman," pointing to me, which again drew down the quizzing-glass, I say this young gentleman," with more emphasis, "has given us such information that I think it possible to recapture an Indiaman or two if not one of the frigates—that is, supposing the duty we owe our sovereign animates every one alike. It is true the seventy-four is rather an ugly customer; but still, sir, with proper zeal, and by cautious manœuvring, we may lay an anchor to windward of him. What is the effective state of your ship, sir?"

"I have ever considered, my lord, that obedience is the first test of duty," answered Captain Rosewater, flaunting a perfumed handkerchief to the great annoyance of Lord Amelius; "and therefore, my lord, where I lead my men must follow. Will your lordship, ha—he?" offering a richly chased gold snuff-box to the old man's notice.

"No, sir, think ye," replied his lordship, contemptuously; but the pulverized particles catching his nostrils, he added, sneezing, "D—n,—*shaw* your snuff—*shaw*—I want no such *esh*—*ratchshaw*—no—such—*ratchshaw*—stimulants. Here, steward! Bagatelle! where the devil are you all, and be d—d to ye?"

"Here, ma lor," replied a diminutive little fellow, in clean milk-white trousers and buff banyan, with his hair as stiff as a Friesland hen, "here, ma lor, vat is your *plaisir*!"

"The eau de Cologne, Bagatelle," said his lordship, "depechez vous!"

"Tout suit, ma lor!" exclaimed the obsequious valet, whilst Captain Rosewater looked proudly and stiffly as he played with an immense bullion tassel that hung suspended at the hilt of his regulation-sword. "Sorry to offend your lordship," he exclaimed, winking slyly at Dashall; and as Lord Amelius turned to receive the eau de Cologne, the mischievous creature contrived to drop some of the snuff on the nose of one of the dogs, who instantly commenced yelping and sneezing, to the still greater annoyance of the old man. A little eau de Cologne for Mignon, Bagatelle," said Rosewater, with the most perfect coolness, which entirely threw Lord Amelius out of all gravity; and observing the valet about to comply with the request, he gave him a set in his stern that threw him off his balance, and down dropped Bagatelle upon the frightened animal, overturning the basket of cotton, and bringing all three of the brutes at him open-mouthed. At last the poor fellow got up, scratching his seat of honour, and knowing the choleric temper of his master, made a clear run for it out of the cabin, to the great amusement of Rosewater and Dashall, who indulged in a hearty laugh at the unfortunate valet's wo-begone phiz, in which they were soon joined by Lord Amelius himself.

At this moment, the report of distant artillery was heard, and the first lieutenant again appeared

at the cabin-door. "The enemy has re-opened her fire, my lord, upon the *Blazeaway*," said the officer, "and a light breeze is springing up from the south-west."

"The brig must *blaze away* in return," said his lordship; "in the mean time, make the signal to close."

"Ay, ay, my lord," replied the officer; "shall we lay the main-yard square, or keep her jogging?"

"Come to the wind on the starboard tack, Mr. Handsail," answered his lordship; "keep the main-topsail aback, but let her have steerage way, and see the jib clear all for running up, and every thing ready for making sail. What are the enemy about?"

"They have not yet got the wind, my lord, and are much the same as when you left the deck," said the Lieutenant; "except that the boats have got alongside, and the nearest frigate's head has been towed round, but her shots fall short."

"The nearest frigate—" reiterated his lordship, "that is——"

"The *Cleopatra*, my lord," said I, "with the jury-bowsprit."

"Thank you, Mr. Grummett," said his lordship, whilst Captain Rosewater again took my altitude with his quizzing-glass, and laughingly said, "Grummett! Grummett! what a queer roundabout name; I suppose, my lord, you have all taken your *clews* from him."

"Really, Captain Rosewater," exclaimed his

lordship, "you are incorrigible. But let me request you to be serious on duty, whilst I point out to you what I conceive to be the most eligible mode of attacking the enemy, and any suggestions you may offer will meet with every attention; and I trust that you also, Captain Dashall, will give your free and candid opinion on the subject."

The two officers then attentively listened to the plan of Lord Amelius, after which each expressed himself relative to improvements on it; and though nothing could win Captain Rosewater from the extremes of foppery and fashion, yet I was much struck with the plain manly good sense that marked his suggestions—indicating a thorough knowledge of seamanship, and evincing the firmness of a brave and determined man.

It was proposed to try, by every practicable manœuvre, to detach the frigates from the seventy-four, and whilst the *Fortunée* attacked the *Cornelle*, the *Donkeyana* and the *Blazeaway* were to tackle the *Cleopatra*. If it was not possible to effect this, a dash was to be made at the prizes, and whilst the two frigates kept the French men-of-war in check, Captain Dashall was to board one of the *Indiamen*, and endeavour to bring her off.

"The enemy have caught the breeze, my lord," said the first lieutenant, "and have bore up, steering away north-east. The *Donkeyana* and the *Blazeaway* have closed."

"Very well, Mr. Handsail," said his lordship,

"I shall be on deck directly." The lieutenant disappeared. "And now, gentlemen, I know you will second me in any attempt that may be made on the enemy; we must stick as close to them as a sucking-fish; your boats are ready—you will excuse ceremony."

"Not a word, my lord, on the subject," replied Captain Rosewater; "I detest ceremony—merely observing it for the sake of etiquette. Mignon," he continued, addressing the dog, "ma bellaute, voulez vous un petit pris de tabac ou eau de Cologne?—Lord Amelius, your obedient—Dashall, I wish you would get me a piano-forte and some snuff out of *Leaden-hall*—Mr. Grummett, may you never want a lanyard—Adieu, mes petit chiens—adieu!" and this strange compound quitted the cabin with a fantastic air that would have graced a French dancing-master.

"With your permission, my lord," said Captain Dashall, "I will take Mr. Grummett with me; his father is an old friend of mine, and I, certainly, should feel pleasure in showing attention to his son."

"As you please, Dashall," replied his lordship; "I hope you understand my instructions, and I know your zeal for the service will lead you to do all in your power to carry them into effect."

Captain Dashall bowed, and we withdrew to the quarter-deck, where I could not avoid observing the great order, cleanliness, and regularity which prevailed, when compared with what I had seen

on board the *Corneille*. There was nothing superfluous in her rigging; no lofty flying-kites to worry the topmen, and no unnecessarily polished bolts or bars on deck to drag the half-muttered curse from those below. All was neat, but ready at a moment's notice for active service; the officers seemed to be familiar and friendly with each other; the seamen looked contented and happy. Upon the *Fortunée's* lee-beam laid the *Donkeyana*—mast towering above mast, and sail over sail, up to moon-rakers, whilst her bright spindles aloft, and her bright every thing below, glistened in the rays of the sun, and dazzled the eyes to look at her. On the weather-quarter laid the *Blazeaway*, as beautiful a model as ever cleft a wave, with every mast, yard, and sail in exact proportion, and her standing and running rigging as taut as the strings of a fiddle.

Soon after we had shoved off from the frigate the coxswain put a note into my hand. At first I thought that there must be some mistake; but on looking at the address it was plainly enough written, "To Mr. Grummett," and on being requested by Dashall to read it, I found the following words:—"The young gentlemen of the *Fortunée* request Mr. Grummett's acceptance of a few *duds*." "There's a trunk there, sir,—in amidships, sir," said the coxswain; and when I got on board the brig I ascertained that it contained two good blue stits, half a dozen white shirts, all clean, and nearly new, half a dozen pairs of stockings, two pairs

of shoes—in short, a regular outfit, even to cocked hat and dirk, all collected in a few minutes; and never did my heart expand with more grateful feelings as I shed many tears of real delight on this kind and benevolent testimonial. I did not think it right, however, to accept of Captain Dashall's offer to become a midshipman in the brig, though I readily consented to remain with him till we reached England, when I could apply to my father for his consent to my entering the Royal Navy. The Captain approved of my intentions, and informed me that he owed a debt of gratitude to my paternal grandfather, through whose interest he had obtained his first commission.

The enemy were now running away large, but not making any very rapid progress on account of the heavy sailing of the Asia; the English squadron kept as close in pursuit as prudence would allow, for the seventy-four had taken her station in the rear of the others, and had run out two long 24-pounders abaft, from which she kept up an incessant firing, and was answered by the single midship-gun from the saucy little Blazeaway, but neither doing any very material injury to the other. .

About noon the *Fortunée* spoke the *Donkeyana*; and in a few minutes afterwards the latter was under a crowd of canvass, and her course changed so as to allow of her running clear to get ahead of the enemy; but this was observed by the seventy-four, who, after speaking the frigates, instantly

made sail, and hauled up to intercept her progress. This was precisely the point at which Lord Amelius was aiming, and the *Fortunée* and the *Blazeaway* spread themselves out at a considerable distance from each other, for the purpose of catching any straggling cruiser to aid them in the attack.

No sooner, however, had the sun descended below the horizon than they again closed; and the seventy-four being considerably out of gun-shot, Lord Amelius determined to make a bold push to recapture the *Asia*, then some distance astern of the rest. It was about five bells in the first watch when his lordship hailed us, and communicated his intentions. The night was beautifully clear, with a brisk breeze and smooth water. The *Corneille* was still without her mizen-mast, and consequently much disabled. The *Dryad* and the *Blazeaway* were very soon staggering under every stitch of canvass they could carry, and rapidly gaining upon the enemy, who made very little show of resistance. The frigates continuing their course, apparently unaware of our approach.

The whole of the *Blazeaway's* crew were mustered by divisions, and as they stood toeing a line fore-and-aft along each side of the brig, dressed in white trousers and white frocks, the latter having a blue star upon both arms, and another on the breast, with a broad leathern belt round the waist, supporting a well-tempered cutlass, a pistol, and a

bayonet, they certainly had a very formidable appearance; and the whole being strong, fine-looking-men, gave sanguine expectations of success.

During the period of excitement the heart feels a proud exultation at witnessing such a spectacle, and not a thought is given as to the probable results of the conflict. Full of animation and determined resolution, the brave band, united in one common feeling of nature's brotherhood, stood firmly but silently, as their arms were examined by the officers, and the particular duty of each was pointed out. There were no pale and haggard features,—there was no semblance of disease,—but the warm blood of robust health flowed riotously through the veins, and a secret communion of spirit went from breast to breast, binding them in stronger resolves to stand by one another, even unto death. It was the first time I had beheld such preparations on board a man-of-war; and though somewhat accustomed to the noise and bustle of fighting, it was impossible for a lad like myself to look upon the *quiet* of such a scene, and the noble beings before him, without shuddering at the deed of blood in which they were about to engage.

It was near midnight when the *Asia* opened a fire of musketry from her poop, and the *Cleopatra* rounded-to for her support; but observing the approach of the *Fortunée*, she saluted the latter with a broadside that completely riddled her sails, which

the *Fortunée*, hauling up within pistol-shot, returned. The *Corneille* joined her companion, and they were soon hotly engaged.

In the mean time, our little craft dashed gallantly onward, ranging up on the larboard side of the *Indiaman*,—the 'men, with their cutlasses unsheathed, and tomahawks prepared, all ready to board. Not a voice was heard on our decks; for the few that were wounded suppressed the groans which agony would have enforced. We were now running ahead of the *Asia*, when the sonorous and deep voice of Captain Dashall exclaimed, "Hard a port the helm!" The tiller was instantly jammed hard over, and the glorious little vessel, prompt in obedience, flew round at its control. "Boarders away," resounded fore-and-aft, and the men who had hitherto stood almost motionless, suddenly filled the fore and main-rigging and the hammock-nettings; gripping their cutlasses more firmly, or waving them above their heads, in their eagerness for the fray. Then came a crashing of spars and a rending of sails—and the next moment there was a concussion that shook every timber in the brig down to her very keel; and she lay broad upon the *Indiaman's* larboard bow. The shrill blast of a bugle was succeeded by a wild simultaneous shout, as the brave crew of the sloop-of-war, headed by their gallant Captain, scrambled to the *Asia's* fore-castle, cutting down all before them.

Many attempts have been made to describe the

boarding of an enemy; but, as my naval readers who have been engaged in such affairs must well know, even the most vivid description must fall far short of the reality. Indeed, the chivalrous nature of the enterprise produces such romantic and high-wrought enthusiasm, connected, at the same time, with the characteristic *diableries* of British men-of-war's men, that the best effort to give a just colouring to the picture must fail; and, in numerous cases, if it *was* possible to be faithfully accurate, the uninitiated reader would suspect that the writer was exceeding the limits of credibility.

The Frenchmen, with their bristling bayonets, met the onset with determined resistance. Fire was streaming from the clashing cutlasses,—the musket sent forth its red death-dealing flame,—the tomahawks descended with crashing energy on many a devoted head,—the crimson blood was spurting from the mangled wounds, staining both enemy and friend,—and many a daring tar, whose voice had joined the shout, and whose hand had cleft its way, lay extended on the deck a breathless corpse; whilst others, from whom the tide of existence was fast ebbing, still resolutely exerted their wasting strength to hurl destruction on the foe.

The Indiaman's forecastle was cleared, but the booms and the waists presented a strong phalanx of men, far exceeding in numbers what might have been expected as a prize-crew; yet this did not

deter the boarders from advancing; and throwing himself amongst the body, heedless of the thrusts that were directed towards him, or the many muzzles down whose bore he might have looked, Captain Dashall cheered his men and rushed to the encounter. The Frenchmen retreated: both waists were filled with the gallant crew of the brig, pressing close upon the flying enemy, when a lofty barrier was discovered thrown right across the fore part of the quarter-deck, and the next moment the discharge of an eighteen-pounder carronade, heavily loaded with langriddle and musket-balls, swept down both friend and foe in one promiscuous heap. Then arose loud shrieks and yells of agony, that were answered with cheers of derision by the Frenchmen from behind their covert; and another report on the other side indicated that the same scene was acting there.

Captain Dashall and his men were compelled to retreat to the fore-castle; but oh, how his numbers had been thinned: of a hundred daring fellows, nearly one-half had fallen; and though the enemy had suffered more severely, as the dead upon the decks bore ample witness; yet, by the numerous voices that were heard from abaft, there still appeared to be a strong muster remaining.

A cheer,—a truly British cheer,—was now resounding from the poop, and Captain Dashall, supposing some of his crew had gained that part of the ship, again led his men, and passing along the

booms, rushed aft to attack the barrier, formed of packages of hay that had been brought on board for the cattle, and some bales that had been hoisted up out of the hold, leaving a couple of port-holes, through which the carronades were pointed.

The barrier was surmounted,—the boarders plunged headlong on to the quarter-deck, which appeared to be deserted; but a heavy and destructive fire of musketry from the cuddy showed that the French had taken up a new position. About a dozen of the *Blazeaways* had got aft, outside the ship, and were in possession of the poop, demolishing the skylights, for the purpose of jumping down amongst the enemy. Captain Dashall urged his men to the charge upon the cabin; but another eighteen-pounder carronade, loaded in the same manner as the others, was fired right through the bulkhead, and stretched several on the deck, never, by their own exertion, to rise again; and amongst them the truly brave and intrepid Dashall.

At this moment, whilst the smoke was thick about my eyes, and the rattling of musketry was ringing in my ears, my arm was firmly grasped, and, amidst the confusion that prevailed, I recognised the person and voice of old Harvey. "It's of no manner o' use, Mr. Grummett," said the veteran, "to hold out again 'em. You and the men *must* surrender, for nearly the whole of the *Cornille's* ship's company are on board: the man-o'-

war brig is already in their possession. I would not counsel you to strike, sir, but it's impossible to resist—there's not a chance left. Look there, Mr. Grummett," he added, pointing out at the quarter-deck port, where, in the clear moonlight, I saw the brig a-beam of the Indiaman, and the French colours above the English: in a few minutes afterwards I was again a prisoner.

The *Fortunée* behaved most gallantly, but the seventy-four approaching, she was compelled to haul off, though not before she had greatly crippled her opponents in their spars and rigging, besides killing and wounding nearly two-thirds of the men. But judge of my surprise when I understood from old Harvey that we had actually been caught in our own trap: the Captain of the seventy-four had seen through the trick of detaching him from the squadron, and directing the Captain of the *Corneille* to send all the hands he could spare to the *Asia* to prepare defences, and resist the boarding either of the frigate or the brig, he made sail in chase. The frigates had seen us from the time of our making sail, and the *Asia* was purposely left astern as a decoy: how well they succeeded I have already shown.

On the first impulse nothing could be more natural for me than to suppose that my conduct would be visited with the severest punishment, although I felt that a brave enemy would applaud rather than condemn. But I had been more an

instrument in the hands of others than acting upon any responsibility of my own ; and I was fully sensible of this, though our captors were not so : yet I determined to take as much as possible to myself, from a double feeling, arising out of pride on my own part, and a desire to screen the men on theirs.

Nothing could surpass the delight evinced by the Captain of the *Corneille* when I again appeared on his quarter-deck, and he pointed to the vanquished brig : but this was only momentary : he suddenly checked himself, and seizing my hand, he pressed it with energy, saying, "*Je suis bien aise de vous voir ;*" and I most firmly believed him.

The slaughter on board the frigates and the *Indiamen* had been very great ; and such was their damaged condition, that had the seventy-four been away, nothing could have saved them from being captured : as it was, they were many leagues from home, and British cruisers were flying about in all directions.

In the forenoon watch, on the following morning, the French ships hoisted their ensigns half-peaked up, and their pennants half-mast high, whilst the seventy-four, hauling to the wind, displayed an enormous white flag at the main, which was quickly answered by a corresponding flag on board the *Fortunée*, and the green barge that had chased us when making our escape was sent on board the *Indiaman* for the remains of the gallant *Dashall*. On her return alongside, the body was extended on

flags in a midship on the thwarts,—the Union Jack of England was spread over it,—the French Captains took their stations abaft, with their heads uncovered,—a white flag was hoisted on a staff in the bows,—several boats took the barge in tow, whilst others formed a guard of honour, every one bearing a white flag; and at the firing of a gun, which was answered by the men-of-war, a small band of music played the Dead March, and the procession moved off from the seventy-four towards the *Fortunée*.

The spectacle was grand, but melancholy; the measured sweep of the oars kept time to the slow and solemn strains of the music,—every head was uncovered, and the reports of the minute guns sounded heavily on the waters,—it was a tribute of the brave to the memory of the brave.

At first the *Fortunée* seemed suspicious of the proceedings, and very naturally showed but little disposition to trust men who had so recently violated the sanctuary of a neutral port. But the facts of the case were soon made evident, and the British ships prepared to meet the confidence and generous conduct of the enemy. The boats of the frigates were instantly manned, and carrying the white flag in the bows, the two Captains and other officers advanced to meet the French flotilla. The frigates responded to the minute guns, the ensign and pennants hung drooping from their unwonted places, whilst on both sides the seamen, barehead-

ed crowded in the rigging of every vessel, to watch the issue of the meeting.

At length the boats were near enough to communicate, and Lord Amelius was promptly informed of the loss his country had sustained by the untimely decease of the gallant Dashall, whose mutilated body lay stretched beneath the proud flag of England. Lord Amelius ran alongside the barge, and the officers exchanged salutes, as the two British Captains entered the boat in which were the three French Captains. It was a curious and remarkable sight,—hostility had ceased, nay, even animosity had fled,—a friendly feeling of mutual regard prevailed, and the temporary bond of union bore the impress of the hand of death.

The corpse was uncovered, and all gazed on it in profound silence, which was suddenly broken by the appearance of a wounded seaman, who crept from beneath the thwarts, and folding his arms across his breast, took his seat near the dead man's head. His dress was saturated with blood, which rendered the livid hue of his face more unnaturally pale; the fire of his eye was quenched, the strength of his stout frame was changed to childish weakness,—but he shed no tear,—he breathed no sigh of regret, and the only words he uttered expressed a fervent wish that his spirit might follow that of his beloved master;—it was Spindle, the coxswain. How he had contrived to get into the barge and secrete himself was

unknown; but it was conjectured that it had been connived at by the prize-master on board the Indianaman, who had witnessed the transaction, and respected the motive too much to prevent it.

But the closing scene arrived, and Lord Amelius, with that promptitude of feeling which generally marked his character, decided that the interment should take place where they then were. The proposition was made to the French officers, who felt the delicacy of the compliment, and gave their ready acquiescence. Wrapped in the ensigns of both countries, the body was securely enclosed in a boat's sail, to which several ballast-bags were attached, and whilst this was in progress, a fast-pulling boat hastened to the *Fortunée* for the frigate's chaplain.

Poor Spindle watched the proceedings with agonized attention, and though the soothing voice of kindness endeavoured to assuage his anguish, yet every effort was unavailing. At last a faint smile played upon his features, and a slight tinge of colour passed over the ashy paleness of his countenance. "My lord," said he, "I feel my anchor is coming home, and I wish the worthy clergyman was here. I'm saying I should like to hear him overhaul me a bit, and mayhap he might cast my head the right way, for it is but a sort of blind navigation for a man as knows but little of the marks and beacons. Howsomever, 'tis only carrying on, and mayhap I may get close in the Captain's wake,

and then——The cable is parting, my lord—bury me—bury me with—with the Captain;—do, God for ever bless your lordship,—don't—pray, don't part us. I've neither chart nor compass; no compass, for t'other world,—none, my lord—none; and my only chance—don't part us—my only chance—is too keep in his honour's wake."

"You shall not be parted, my brave fellow," said Lord Amelius, emphatically, "and if you have any other request to make, rely upon it, as far as it is within my power, it shall be most religiously attended to."

"God bless your lordship," faintly uttered the dying seaman, as his decaying strength compelled him to rest his head upon the body of his late commander. "God bless you; I've known him from a boy, and larned him to—but no matter. There's only one as 'll grieve for me,—only one. I'm casting, my lord,—but which way my head 'll go;—well, well;—I'll not slip my manhood afore the French, howsomever; but I loved him, my lord—loved him,—and pleased I am that he has not left me far astarn."

The circumstances connected with the situation of the coxswain, and the attachment he bore to his late Captain, were explained to the French officers, and every one who witnessed the fading of existence could not avoid shedding those rich drops of tender sympathy which are doubly precious when flowing from bold and daring hearts.

"Have you any friend or relative in England to whom you would wish to send a communication?" inquired his lordship.

"It is too late, my lord," replied the seaman, "to say much. I have a sister's son,—a good youth, too; his father was killed in the year of our Lord,—but I forget the year; it was in Duncan's action with the Dutch; he died like a brave man, and Jack Spindle will not disgrace him in his last moments. If your lordship would look upon the boy a bit, it would take a taut strain from my heart."

"Where is he to be found?" inquired Lord Amelius; "if he is worthy care, I pledge my word he shall not want."

"God bless your lordship, again," said the tar, feebly, "I knew you would befriend him; his name is Thomas Mullion, and—my head is paying off. I'm saying he's on board the Magnamee. Now, then, I—I die content."

"Thomas Mullion, on board the Magnanime," reiterated his lordship, as he wrote the name with a pencil in a small pocket-book; "and now, my good fellow, is there any thing else?" No answer was returned;—poor Spindle lay motionless; and silence reigned for several minutes, whilst his spirit passed away.

"He is gone, my lord," said the surgeon of the *Fortunée*, who had remained by him from his first appearance, and was now employed in closing the poor fellow's eyes; "there is nothing to prevent

his earnest request being complied with, for no power on earth can reanimate his frame.

- Thus assured, directions were given to prepare the remains of poor Spindle for burial, which was soon accomplished, and the body of the humble coxswain was extended by the side of his late superior: it gave the moral—"Death levels all distinctions."

- By the time all was in readiness, the chaplain, arrayed in his canonicals, had reached the barge, and shortly afterwards commenced reading the service for the dead. It was a strange, but solemn scene; even the soppery of Captain Rosewater was laid aside, as the voice of the reverend minister was heard repeating those beautiful and consolatory passages which direct the mind to an hereafter, under the sure and certain hope of a blessed immortality of light, and life, and peace. After the words, "Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God to take unto himself the souls of our dear brethren, here departed, we therefore commit their bodies to the deep," &c.,—the clergyman ceased, and the band played a funeral dirge, as the Captains of the two hostile nations raised the dead from the thwarts, and gently consigned them to their ocean grave; the waters closed over their heads, and then rolled on as smooth as ever; the music stopped, the chaplain continued the service to the end, and for several minutes afterwards the audience remained unmoved, whilst the quivering lips and the fixed eye afforded certain indications of secret

prayer amongst the English; the French, more openly, crossed themselves, and offered up their petitions aloud.

The ceremony ended, the Captains in the barge conferred together a few minutes in unrepressed amity, and the other officers in their several boats followed the example of their superiors. The incidents that had recently occurred, the merits of their respective ships, the probable chances of getting to France, and other subjects, were discussed with politeness and good humour.

At length, the two English Captains quitted the French barge, and embarked in their own boats; it was a signal for all communications to cease, and the several officers closed with their respective commanders; a parting salutation was made, and each party returned to their ships, once more to be opponents and enemies.

It was gratifying to me to hear from the Captain of the *Corneille*, that Lord Amelius had made particular inquiries respecting so humble an individual as myself, and had earnestly recommended me to his especial care,—a favour that I soon felt the effects of, by having all the clothes that were given me by the midshipmen of the *Fortunée* safely returned, and other acts of kindness, which I shall always bear in grateful remembrance.

It is hardly necessary for me to say how deeply I deplored the loss of a friend so recently found; but I may observe, that the grief I endured swallowed up the feelings of distress I should have

otherwise experienced at my own misfortunes. Of one thing, however, I was satisfied,—that the kind-hearted Lord Amelius would immediately reply to any inquiries my parents should make relative to my situation; and I must acknowledge there was no small portion of pride and pleasure in my breast, when I contemplated that the affair which had taken place would be made public in England; and certainly I had no reason to be ashamed of the part I had borne in it.

But it is time to return to other matters. The white flags no longer fluttered in the breeze,—the national ensigns were hoisted on both sides for about half an hour, as emblems of defiance, and the gallant ships pursued their way.

CHAPTER V.

AFTER the funeral described in my last, we continued with a fine fair breeze running for the Bay of Biscay, and the French Commodore determined to keep in a course for L'Orient, so that, should the wind head them in getting in-shore, he might have a port either way under his lee. The British frigates still continued to dog us most closely; and whenever any of the Indiamen dropped astern, they were sure to get a peppering from these indefatigable cruisers. Sometimes they would run ahead of us, and then frequently stretch away upon each wing to look out for any straggling man-of-war that might be near. At night, guns were fired, rockets sent up, and blue-lights burned for the purpose of attracting notice; but, excepting a few merchantmen, (some of which, however, we concluded were prizes, by their course being changed for England after having been boarded,) nothing hostile made its appearance, and we began to make up our minds for a French prison.

The various actions in which the *Corneille* had been engaged had made severe havoc with her men, and the confinement of so many prisoners down in the hold, where they breathed an atmosphere pregnant with the effluvia from putrid matter, soon introduced a virulent fever; and numbers being attacked by dysentery, increased the horrible condition of this infernal place. The French, never over cleanly themselves, seemed to be totally regardless of the situation in which the English were placed: they still persisted in keeping the hatches on, and refused to let the wretched sufferers have any intercourse with the main-deck (except to throw the dead overboard,) lest the infection should spread among themselves. But the disease, which might have easily been checked in the first instance by throwing a current of air through the hold and pumping clean water into it, which could have been readily pumped out again after washing the ballast and the timbers,—the disease gained such fatal ground that the men determined to die rather by rushing on their enemies, than by perishing piece-meal. It was indeed dreadful to hear the shrieks of despair mingling with the groans of expiring nature. The yell of the maniac, writhing in convulsive agony, was blended with the wild laugh, still more dreadful to listen to, of the poor wretch whose burning brain was cheating him into prospects of fantastic pleasure. The dying man raved with horrid blas-

phemy at the bloated corpse by his side, and then stretched himself out, and with a curse expired!

Repeated attempts had been made by those who yet had strength to force the hatchways, but they were quickly repulsed, and many were severely wounded, without obtaining that immediate release from misery, the hope of which had urged them to the attack. Poor T——, whose unlucky joke had caused the unpleasant affair between the Captain and Lieutenant (as narrated in page 332 of the United Service Journal for July,) had been kept in close confinement from that period in a part of the hold screened off by an old sail from the foremast-men, where several of the petty officers were also confined, and Sergeant Jennings amongst the number (old Harvey remained in the Indiaman.)—Poor T—— was seized with the distemper, and though the British officers earnestly entreated the Captain of the frigate to sanction his removal, yet he was inexorable. By especial favour I was permitted, with two others, to visit him; but so emaciated had he become, that I could hardly believe the evidence of my own senses that he was the same man. His once full and sun-bronzed countenance was pale and shrunk and hollow; his fine, quick, animated eye, now filmed and dim, was deeply sunk—almost buried in his head. The proud spirit that had battled with its earthly foes and braved the elemental strife when the Creator loosed the winds of heaven to combat with the raging waters, was now subdued and

broken, and the old man wept with childish weakness when we spoke to him. He was unshaved, unwashed, uncombed; and the squalid dirty figure he presented was painful for the mind to contemplate, and revolting for the eye to look upon. Oh, how changed from the active neatly-dressed chief-officer of the *Asia*! Yet such had been the devastation of a little more than a week on a frame and temperament from which hope had departed.

Our interview was but short,—indeed it would have been impossible to have remained long,—and when we bade him a farewell, he was fully sensible *that* farewell was an eternal one. He expressed very warm gratitude for the many kind attentions he had experienced from the Sergeant, and exclaimed with much bitterness against the cruelty that had been inflicted upon him by his merciless-captors. In a few hours afterwards, poor T—— was launched into his ocean-grave.

It may be asked, where was the Surgeon of the frigate or his assistants all this time? They suffered the poor wretches to perish without an endeavour to save; and there was no Phineas to stand in the gap and stay the plague. The Surgeon of the *Corneille* was ill-adapted for his station; and, as is constantly the case in all badly-commanded ships, his subordinates were under no restraint from discipline. Yet, let me not be misunderstood, as desirous of casting dishonourable reflections on the service of a hostile nation; for, in after years, when fortune again threw me into their power, I

experienced treatment which set all complaints at defiance. But the revolutionary spirit which had ravaged France was far from having subsided, and many men obtained commands and posts whom nature designed for very different stations to those which they occupied. Every man on board was a *citizen*,—from the Captain to the meanest sweeper,—though the *bonnet rouge* had yielded to more appropriate costume. Still there was no Monarch on the throne,—whose very name inspired courage,—as was the case in the English Navy; and the First Consul was then only known as a designing and daring man, who boldly executed what his talents planned.

The morning after poor T——'s interment, the prisoners who remained free from disease were mustered upon deck. One of them,—a Guernsey man, and a plausible specious fellow,—was directed by the Captain to address the rest on the advantages to be derived from abandoning the flag they had served under, and entering the national service of France. Immediate enrolment (and, of course, removal from the pestiferous hold) was offered, with the choice of either of the ships to serve in; but the main object was to man the *Blazeaway*.

Most of the foreigners, to whom England was the land of the stranger, very readily complied; nor, indeed, could I blame them: for it might be considered a choice, either of life or death, in which the love of the former prevailed: but, to the honour of my countrymen, though the **strongest**

inducements were held out,—though threats were lavishly made in case of refusal,—yet they did one and all repel, both with indignation and scorning, and were once more sent down to their noisome dungeon. In the afternoon, however, they were again brought up to witness the embracing of the tri-colour, as the ceremony of enrolment and acquiring the rights of citizenship. A tempting entertainment was set out upon the quarter-deck, and the French officers actually waited upon the new recruits; but even this had no other effect upon the British seamen than drawing from them expressions of contempt. Some of the foreigners taunted the poor, but honest and firm tars, whilst others felt a shame at having deserted old messmates in their affliction. A similar scene, we understood, was acting on board the other French men-of-war, and it was asserted that several Englishmen had entered; but this, as far as it regards the latter part, we afterwards ascertained to be false.

The ceremony of enrolment was concluded by copious libations of wine, and a small quantity was distributed amongst the English prisoners, who returned to their prison much invigorated by the enjoyment of the fresh air: indeed, it became evident that one great cause of the close confinement arose from the expectation that its horrors would have such an effect upon the hearts of the sufferers, as to make them glad of escaping it at any cost; and therefore the more likely to become renegades and traitors.

Jennings had endured great misery, but he bore it all with more fortitude than I could have imagined. He accounted for it by saying, "Hope had never deserted him, and in his active exertions for others he was prevented from brooding over his own misfortunes." This has been a lesson to me through every change and trial of life. Self-love is one of the strongest passions of the human breast; but, whilst it elevates the mind in prosperity, it operates in a diametrically opposite degree when labouring under adversity. Thus, I have generally found, that where self-love has been small, tranquillity and benevolence have prevailed; and notwithstanding the most trying vicissitudes which have beset existence, despair seldom or never entered. This has been too frequently mistaken for apathy or indifference; but in my intercourse with my fellow creatures I have invariably found that the individuals thus blessed were persons of acute sensibility and noble disposition: indeed, the words of the Sheffield bard may be here very aptly quoted—

"Deep streams are silent from the generous breast;
The dearest feelings are the last confess'd."

"Halloo!" my readers will say, "here's old Grummett a moralizing, which is about as pleasant to read as a table of logarithms on a rainy day."

Reader, I have been calling to remembrance the spectacle in the hold of the *Corneille*, and it has come before me in all its sombre colouring of fear-

ful reality: the companions and friends of my youth—now dust and ashes in their graves—have again, in the vivid eye of imagination, been moving around me; and I find it, at times, both gratifying and instructive to hold converse with the dead. But I will mix me another glass of grog, and proceed into the *thick* of my story.

Jennings and I had got apart from the rest, and, leaning over the forecastle gun, were gazing at the Donkeyana, nearly hull down, ahead. The setting sun shone brilliantly upon her white sails, which showed bright and beautiful above the deep blue of the waters, when suddenly, instantaneously the whole fabric disappeared, and both of us drew a long respiration as the apprehension crossed our minds that she had foundered.

But we were not the only individuals who had witnessed this strange occurrence: the old boat-swain was looking on, and immediately exclaimed, “Le brouillard, le brouillard—mes enfans—’tis no more as de fog-bank so mosh tick you sall cut him mid de knife.” And sure enough it was so.

The communication was made without loss of time to the quarter-deck, and almost at the same moment the seventy-four hove-to and made the signal for the squadron to close. This was promptly obeyed; the boats of the different ships boarded the Commodore, and orders were issued for altering the course the moment they entered the misty veil. The boats returned, the sails were filled, and we were soon in so dense an atmosphere, that

it was like breathing pea-soup—whilst it was barely possible at the taffrail to extend the vision a fathom beyond the flying-jib-boom-end. Friends and foes had disappeared, though we were occasionally warned of the proximity of vessels, by the sounds which were conveyed through the medium of the fog.

The breeze freshened—the course was changed two points to starboard—and the Captain of the *Corneille* hugged himself with much satisfaction at the certainty that Lord Amelius Beaumscratch had not been able, on account of the distance and sudden obscurity, to communicate with the *Donkeyana*: for the citizen skipper did not take into his calculations that the foresight of his lordship had already provided for such an emergency, and he therefore indulged the assurance that the enemy would be thrown out in the chase. It is not improbable that the British ships might have been somewhat puzzled; but during the night one of the prizes under a press of canvass having ranged up alongside of the *Cleopatra*, the latter mistook her for the *Fortunéc*, and without waiting to undeceive themselves, poured a whole broadside into the unfortunate Indiaman, which brought down her fore and maintop-masts, and so riddled her sails that she dropped astern,—in rigging a complete wreck; and a few days subsequent was recaptured by a privateer corvette out of Liverpool, by which every soul of the privateer's crew made a handsome fortune. These facts I afterward

learned; for so certain was the *Cleopatra* of having beaten off the *Fortunée*, that it was announced in the *Moniteur*, with considerable additions and sundry marvellous embellishments.

The firing, however, had its due effect upon the British ships, and they acted accordingly; though the fog for three days continued so thick that, except occasional glimpses of some darker object amidst the universal gloom, we saw nothing whatever. The breeze kept snuffling more and more till it got into a downright gale, and away we flew upon its wings at the rate of ten knots an hour. By our reckoning and soundings we were rapidly approaching the land, and on the morning of the fourth day, the fog having partially cleared away, we saw *Belle-île*, and, what was of infinite delight to me, the British fleet of thirteen sail, about four miles in-shore of 'us. Had the dense haze continued, we should have run right into the midst of them; as it was, they caught sight of 'us and soon were in hot pursuit.

L'Orient was now no port for the *Corneille*, and either way there was every chance of being cut off. The boatswain was questioned, and he decided the point by altering the course to starboard, so that we might run for Basque Roads or the river Garonne. As we drew in towards the land, the fog disappeared, and by noon we had a bright sky and a clear horizon. About three miles outside of us was the little *Blazeaway*, and hull down at sea the seventy-four. The brig followed our example,

and having the advantage in heels, was quickly alongside within hail. The gale had fallen to a fresh breeze, the private signal was distinctly visible at the main of the British Vice-Admiral, who had his flag in a first rate, besides which we could distinguish two other three-deckers, eight two-deckers, and a brace of large class frigates.

The *Corneille* being unable to answer the private signal, the two English frigates were detached from the fleet after us, whilst the ships of the line gave up the chase and returned to their station. But the French seventy-four, which they had mistaken for one of their own look-outs in pursuit of the *Corneille*, not replying to the private signal, a first rate and a seventy-four were soon under a cloud of sail to bring her to action. At first the French Commodore hauled up a little in the line that we were steering, but he suddenly again changed his course towards the Penmark Point, evidently intending to try the Raz Passage, and either run into Douvernanez Bay, or else cross its entrance for Brest; but we soon lost sight of both the pursued and the pursuers as we staggered on, every stick chattering with the press of sail, and spurning the bubbling waves from our fore foot,—the spray dancing up as high as the fore-yard. The *île d'Oie* (now changed in its name to *île Dieu*) was fast growing out of the water when the wind shortened upon us, and threw the English frigates so far to leeward, as to render it doubtful whether they would weather the island; whilst

we were sure, in a good offing, of lying well to windward. But now we were upon a bowline,—the *Corneille* missed her aft-sails, for the jury mizen-mast would only carry the try-sail; and the mizen-topsail was nothing more than spare fore-top-gallant sail, with the royal set over it. Nevertheless she walked along like a race-horse; and the English ships, their spars bending and springing like a bow, were nearly within gun-shot upon the lee quarter. Evening approached,—the *île d'Oie* was weathered with a long cable's length to spare; but the British frigates were compelled to go about and make a reach off from the land, (the passage between the island and the main was not then known, and if it had been, the frigates must have tacked as they did.) The safety of the *Corneille* seemed now to be certain, and she hoisted a large tri-colour ensign, whilst the *Blazeaway* did the same, but with the English colours under it. At this moment two sail were seen on the weather bow running in for the land, and at first they were supposed to be the *Cleopatra* and one of the prizes; but, as we neared each other, two new cloths in the leading ship's fore-topsail assured us that old Lord Amelius had followed pretty close in our track, and the *Donkeyana* had been equally vigilant.

The joy which had been excited by the prospect of escaping into port was considerably damped by this discovery; but scarcely had night closed in, and the *Sable d'Olonne* lights blazed in the dis-

tance, when the tide set strong against us, and the wind fell to almost a calm. The Swedish boat-swain, who was well acquainted with the coast, saw instantly the advantage; and clewing up the sails as quick as possible, the anchor was let go in ten fathoms, the brig bringing up about half a cable's length inside of us. The sails were rolled up and stopped to the yards,—every thing was prepared for getting under weigh at a moment's warning,—the lights were carefully concealed,—the guns were cast loose, and were only secured by the tackles,—and every eye was anxiously looking out for the coming foe.

About an hour had elapsed when we saw them close to us, a little afore the beam, and running away large to the English frigates that were still under sail.

When they got upon our quarter, however, and had opened the *Corneille* out from the land, the mistake was discovered, and the *Fortunée* rounding to, treated us with a rattling broadside, which we, having a spring upon our cable, were not slow in returning. The frigate then brought up, all standing, within long shot astern of us, and a distant cannonading ensued, in which we sustained but little damage, though frequently hulled.

Soon after midnight, the top-men were sent aloft upon the yards ready to cut the stops,—the sheets were stretched along the deck,—and a couple of stout hands were placed with sharp axes to cut the cable when the word was given. A light air of wind came stealthily from the north-west,—the

studding-sail booms were rigged out,—and about two bells in the middle watch the command was issued, and every cloth that could catch a cap full of wind was packed upon the craft. By the trailing of the hand-lead on the ground and her over-running the cable, it was ascertained that she could make head-way: the axes went to work, and we were soon creeping alongshore with the brig. The *Fortunée* and *Donkeyana* slipped, and as they caught the first of the freshening breeze, the distance between us was considerably lessened, and the English prisoners indulged an ardent hope that they should yet be saved from a French prison.

Every moment grew more and more precious to the French, for when abreast of *Sable d'Olonne*, Lord Amelius was within pistol-shot, but refrained from rounding to, lest he should lose ground. The breeze, however, got more steady, and the *Corneille* showed her superiority in sailing by gaining rapidly on the *Fortunée*, when the latter suddenly presenting her broadside, took in our studding sails in much less time than had been occupied in setting them; but though almost every shot told somewhere aloft, yet not one of the principal spars received the smallest damage.

Off *Sable d'Olonne* lie several half-tide rocks, and the prize-master of the *Blazeaway*, being imperfectly acquainted with the navigation, contrived to knock the brig against one of them in the prettiest manner imaginable, and there she stuck fast, every nail an anchor, and in a very short space of

time was taken possession of by the *Donkeyana*. The occurrence was observed by Lord Amelius, who ran directly into our wake; but the yaw, to effect this, widened the space between us.

Once more the *Fortunée* luffed across our stern, and sent a well directed broadside at our hull. The Captain of the *Corneille* was pointing one of the aftmost guns at the moment the iron came rattling through the cabin windows, and sweeping all before it; he gave one shout—a shriek succeeded, and he lay a bloody corpse. The next in command, a timid and weak man, would have instantly hauled down the colours, but was prevented by the boatswain, who saw that the principal danger was passed, and the *Corneille* might yet escape. Nor was he mistaken; for though much cut up, in a few hours we had got out of the reach of shot, and were running into Basque Roads, between the isles of Rhe and Olleron.

By daylight we were inside the île d'Aix, and at anchor, and all hopes of rescue had vanished. The wounded and sick were sent into hulk, and the prisoners who were in a condition to bear it were embarked in *chasse-marée* and proceeded to Rochefort. I had naturally concluded that the Captain's permission to retain my clothes would not be withdrawn; but in this I was grossly mistaken, for within an hour after his death the whole of the gift from the midshipmen of the *Fortunée* was divided amongst the boys, and on going over the side the hat was taken from my head, and subsequently the jacket.

from my back and the shoes from my feet; so that when we landed at Rochefort I presented a pretty accurate study for a figure of destitution. But in this I was not solitary, for the whole of us when drawn up upon the quay looked like an assemblage of scarecrows mustering by divisions. Still the peculiar characteristics of British tars did not desert them—they cracked their jokes and enjoyed their laugh with their usual recklessness. Our landing had attracted a great crowd of spectators, most of whom gazed with astonishment on the poor lascars, and many were the inquiries as to the country which gave them birth.

“By my soul, then,” said an Irish sergeant, “it’s from Ireland they come.”

“Mais, monsieur, le teint du visage? la couleur?” exclaimed a bystander.

“The visage is it you mane?” answered Pat; “the colour of the countenance? faith then its ateing charcoal and drinking bog-water that’s done it. But I say, darlint, could you oblage me with the smallesst taste of whiskey, for I’m clane kilt in my bowels.”

The Frenchman shook his head—“Je n’entends pas, monsieur; parlez Français, s’il vous plait.”

“Play not a bit of it, darlint,” said Pat; “it’s me-self ud scorn to play upon such a nate and clane looking gentleman; ounly if you could just favour me with—” and Pat put the tip of his thumb to his lips, stretched out his little finger at a right

angle raised his hand gradually to imitate drinking, and then made a most obsequious bow.

“Oui, oui—à boire,” replied the Frenchman, “avoir soif; restez un moment, mon ami;” and the good-natured fellow went away, but soon returned with a gallon can of clear delicious spring water. This was not exactly what Pat wanted, but to those who were suffering from thirst the draught was truly acceptable, and several times did the can go to the well.

“Eh bien, mon ami,” said the Frenchman, addressing Pat, and holding out a small glass of brandy; “voulez-vous de l’eau-de-vie?”

“The blessings of Saint Patrick be on your shoulders till doomsday,” replied the Sergeant, taking the glass and snuffing at the liquor; “it’s like a nosegay, so it is. By the powers, but I wish my aunt Biddy had this glass, it ud just make her a delicate thimble when she mends ould Barney’s brogues;” he swallowed the stuff at a gulp. “May I be bould to ax you the name of the cratur—the brandy I mane?”

“Eau-de-vie,” replied the Frenchman, who readily comprehended the question.

Pat whipped a small piece of chalk out of his waistcoat pocket, and on the handle of his knife marked O. D. V.—“And by my soul, that’s spelling brandy with three letters any how.”

We experienced more civility than I had expected, and I began to congratulate myself under the hope that the worst was past. But this state

of things did not continue long; for scarcely had the last detachment disembarked, when several hundred women, with loud shrieks and imprecations, advanced towards us. Almost every one of them carried some missile or other of a formidable nature, and their inflamed countenances and infuriated gestures excited no small degree of alarm, as we were all defenceless. Our guard, however, immediately interposed between us; but even the sharp-pointed bayonets could not restrain these harpies from rushing on their victims, and several of the prisoners were most severely beaten and lacerated. Twice were these fiends (for I can compare them to nothing else) driven back by the *gens d'armes*, but they quickly rallied again in stronger force, and charged upon us with more desperate energy. In the midst of their murderous cruelty, some were tearing their hair, and weeping and wailing in a truly heart-sickening manner; others were shouting "*Je me vengerai!*"—"J'en aurai ma revanche!"—"Mort aux Anglais!"

The small number of our protectors was completely routed; and but for the presence of mind of Jennings, who promptly formed the whole of the prisoners into a solid square, many lives would have been sacrificed; but the space which our front presented enabled the guard to return to their duty, and by keeping in a more compact body repel the advance of the Amazons. Several of the prisoners had wrested the missiles from the women, and though it was an unnatural spectacle, self-defence

compelled an unsparing use of them, and many of the females lay wallowing in their blood. This aroused the Frenchmen, and the affair began to assume a most alarming aspect, when a re-enforcement of cavalry arrived, and, under their escort, we were conducted to the prison.

I had received a severe contusion on the arm, and a smart blow on the head; and really, when we were passing under the massive archway which formed the entrance to this wretched abode of vice and misery, my heart sank within me, and the tears ran copiously down my face. Only a few weeks had elapsed since I was enjoying the comforts of an excellent home and the kindness of indulgent parents, and now—oh, how changed the picture!

“Courage! courage, my young friend!” exclaimed Jennings, who came to my side; “this is but a rough alphabet to teach you your profession, it is true, but cheer up, there’s hope yet. Hark!” continued he, as the heavy gates were forcibly shut to behind us, and we could hear the yells of the foiled wretches who were thirsting for our blood—“hark, Mr. Grummett, a prison is no such bad place after all, when it becomes a castle of safety. Poor creatures, they are to be pitied too.”

I could not altogether assent to such a proposition, for there seemed to me to have been no cause of provocation; but Jennings afterwards undeceived me: the Corneille had been fitted out at Rochefort, and most of her crew belonged to this place—many

had wives and children, and all had friends who valued them. The marines, who acted as guards over the prisoners whilst ascending the river in the *chasse-marées*, had, on landing, spread the intelligence of the frigate's arrival, and the melancholy tidings of death to many a bereaved heart. Under the first strong impulse of distress, we were pointed out as the fit objects to suffer vengeance, and they were not slow in executing it.

In the prison-yard we were numbered off, and sent in parties of fifteen to different dungeons. That which I was to occupy was situated at the extremity of a long vaulted passage, having cells on each side, the inmates of which, disturbed by our entrance, either growled out their curses or expressed their commiseration; the latter, however, were but few. The flambeaux of the jailors, in flashing their red gleams along this dreary passage, rendered its appearance more terrific; and when we reached the dungeon there seemed to be barely room for us all, even if standing upright. We could, however, by means of a small opening in the wall, strongly secured by stout iron bars, hear the wild tumult in the streets, and the certainty of being saved from sanguinary rage checked the inclination to complain.

As soon as we had entered this detestable hole, the guards took their departure, leaving us in total darkness; but in about an hour's time we were again visited, and each man received a diminutive loaf of coarse bread, and about a pint of half-boiled

horsebeans. Hungry as we were, it was with difficulty we got through the meal, (I have fared worse since though;) but a drop of good brandy in a cup of clear water washed it all down, and we prepared for the night.

The dungeon in the gloom had appeared smaller than it really was, so that about a dozen could lie down six in a row, with their knees dovetailed into the next man's hams, much in the same way as they pack subjects for the dissecting room. This was close stowage, and the great mischief was, that no one, however uneasy his limbs might be, could slue round or change his position without all the others doing the same. "Side out for a bend," was frequently called during the night, and had there been light, it would have been laughable to see the manœuvre. As it was, there was some little fun and punching of ribs before the coil was complete, and the parts put together again like a Chinese puzzle. For myself, I got a corner berth, and sat down crouched up together, my head resting on my knees, and my arms supporting my legs in front. The dungeon was very damp, and the steam arising from so many closely-packed bodies was extremely offensive; but complaints were unavailing, and I contrived to get a few winks of sleep—indeed, I was so weary that I could have snoosed soundly with my head in a bucket of water.

Numerous were the grumblings that the "night

had lasted a whole week, and it would never be day." Some declared that "it was the arctic regions, and the sun had made his bow for three months sartin." Others likened the place to "the black hole at Calcutta," and all consigned the French most piously to a spot whose climate is somewhat hotter than an alderman's kitchen.

At length, morning came, and we were all turned into the yard, where we performed our ablutions at the pump, and were then served with another loaf and a few more horsebeans for breakfast. Those who had saved money (which, however, was rather a dangerous thing to make known) were enabled to obtain a little wine; and, at all events, if we did not gain much nourishment from our grub, we lost nothing in the way of corpulent dimensions, from the flatulent nature of the horsebeans. It was, indeed, a luxurious enjoyment to stretch the limbs, after being jammed up like cases in a ship's hold, and though the prison-yard was not very large, so as to admit of walking about—indeed, our numbers precluded this—yet almost any thing was preferable to close confinement.

About eleven o'clock, an officer, with his suite, attended to take down our examinations, and we were directed to arrange ourselves into separate divisions, according to the ships we had belonged to, the officers of each division to stand in front of the men. This was soon accomplished, and the senior officer of each party was first interrogated as to his

own name, and rank, and country; then the name of the ship—whether man-of-war or merchant-man—what force she carried—from what port sailed, and where bound to, with many other particulars. Next the name and rank of the other officers were set down, and then the names and stations of the men. This occupied several hours, but it was not without many amusing incidents, arising from the mistakes caused—and not unfrequently wilfully so—by a want of knowledge of the French language.

“Comment vous appelez-vous?” inquired the French officer, addressing a thorough old tar of the Smollett school; “Comment vous appelez-vous?”

“Ax the marine there,” replied the veteran: “I no parley ferstand, but the Jollies all speak Dutch.”

“Non, non, mon ami,” returned the Frenchman—“I no mean dusch—I no mean de contrée—your appelez—Sacre! Comment vous nommez-vous?”

“Nummy woo! who the — do you call nummy woo?” exclaimed the seaman, angrily, and taking a severe turn with his quid—“I wants no purser’s ammunition consarns to pass muster. My name’s Zachariah Winchbolt.”

“Jacka—Jacka-Quoi?” inquired the officer—“Le diable catch your nom Jacka-Quoi! Dit-es donc!”

"Jacky Quaw! you bè d—," replied the old tar. "I wish my ould mother could hear you call me so, and me to be named arter a commander-in-chief at Jerusalem. Jacky Quaw, indeed!—d—n my eyes but she'd quaw you, ould chap—my name's Zachariah."

"Zhack-a-rire—c'est bon," said the Frenchman, laughing heartily, in which he was joined by his attendants—"Votre nom me fait *rire* en vérité. Zhackarire—c'est drôle! mais de oder nom, mon ami?"

"The other name, mountseer?" reiterated the tar, "why it's Winchbolt, at your service."

"Eh bien, mon ami," returned the Frenchman, "Vinachébout." Then addressing his secretary or clerk—"Dépêchez-vous—mettez—mettez Zhackarire Vinachébout." Then turning to the seaman, he continued, "Quel est le lieu de votre naissance?"

"I'm blessed if this ar'n't a cut above my education," exclaimed Winchbolt. "I say, Jem, can't you unlay the strands of it for me, and twist up again into twice laid?"

"Why in regard o' the matter o' that," replied the man addressed, (an old boatswain's mate,) "it's a long while since I larned the languages, but howsomever, I'll try my hand at it—Quoi vous havey beswain mountseer?"

"Le lieu de sa naissance," answered the Frenchman.

"He wants the loo of your nazeoux, Zach," said the boatswain's mate, "which, as he seems to be logging down your marks and fashion pieces, I takes him to mean the length o' your nose."

Winchbolt put up his hand to his nasal promontory, which was of unusually large dimensions, and well ornamented with grog-blossoms: "My nose! what the —— can he want with my nose?"

"Sacre!—nez! no, no," exclaimed the examiner, "not de nose ob your face—de—de bert?"

"Oh, wee, wee," returned the boatswain's mate: "he wants to know where you was berthed, Zach."

"Why, mountseer, in the foremost mess, on the starboard side, abreast of the fore-hatchway."

"Ma foi!—qu'il provoque!" muttered the Frenchman—"I mean de born-place."

"Well, why the —— couldn't you say so before?" said the boatswain's mate, "and then I could have translated it as easy as shifting a cable end for end. He wants to know where you was born, Zach?"

"Born! where I was born," answered old Winchbolt, "well, I'm bless'd if that ar'n't a poser, for, d'ye mind, I never axed my father or mother, but I always hailed from Gosport."

"Attendez donc," said the French officer to his clerk, "laissez moi regarder—Zhackarire Vinachebout, de Gooseport. Votre poste, mon ami?"

"Well, I'm blowed but that's a rum un any how," exclaimed Winchbolt, laughing: "I say,

Jem, I'm blessed if he a'rn't axing me if I a'rn't posted—do I look like a skipper, Jem?"

"No, no, Zach; he's axing you in regard of your station," said the boatswain's mate; "and now mind, I'll put in a spoke for you—Il est cannoneer—you're only gunner's mate, Zach, but, d—n me, I have made out a warrant for you, ould boy."

"Canonnier," repeated the Frenchman, bowing—"le premier canonnier, je crois?"

"Ay, ay," answered the boatswain's mate; "and I'm d—d if you find a primer nor him in la belle France!"

The French officer bowed at what he took for a compliment, and then proceeded with his examinations. Numerous were the curious and laughable conversations, nor would those who understood the French language act as translators, lest they should spoil the fun. When this business was closed, our meal of hard bread and horsebeans was renewed, and we were *kindly* requested to *eat heartily*, as it was expected that on the following day we should commence our march for Verdun.

The officers and seamen of the Blazeaway, amongst the former of whom I was by mistake included, were separated from the rest, and placed in a more commodious and airy part of the prison, and clean straw was spread for us to lie down on. That night I slept sweetly and soundly; I had plenty of room to stretch myself, and some one

lent me an old blanket in which I wrapped myself up, and was tolerably warm. It certainly caused me no little regret that my friend Jennings should be sent back to his uncomfortable quarters, but it was an occurrence over which I could have no control, and was indeed myself indebted to mere accident for not sharing it with him.

In the morning I awoke refreshed and invigorated. Lieutenant Tomkin, the first of the *Blazeaway*, requested me to consider him as my friend on account of the respect he should ever cherish for the memory of his brave Captain Dashall. He cautioned me to say nothing relative to my belonging to the captured Indiaman, or that I was in the Company's service, as it would probably prevent my obtaining my parole, which I was sure of as a midshipman of the sloop-of-war.

Once more we mustered in the yard, where we found a strong detachment of soldiers, who were to take charge of us on our first day's march, for as popular fury was at that moment running strong against us in Rochefort, it was deemed advisable to place our personal security beyond the prospect of peril. For breakfast we had a small loaf, a piece of hard cheese, and a plentiful supply of milk to drink. Several naval officers in the French service visited us, (a fleet was then fitting out at Rochefort, and many tempting offers made to induce the midshipmen to accept commissions under the tri-colour. But the temptation was nobly resisted; and the master's mate of the *Blazeaway*,

a remarkably fine young man—he died a post-captain since the peace—collared and shook the miscreant who pestered him with promises and requests. The French lieutenant drew his sword, and made a *longe*, which the master's mate parried with his bare hand; it would have been repeated, but the Frenchman's own friends shamed him of the cowardice of an attack upon an unarmed man. To do him justice he felt their rebuke, and, after apologizing for his conduct, declared he was ready to give the master's mate honourable satisfaction. In an instant F—— accepted the proposal, the sword of a brother officer was lent for the occasion, but the commanding-officer of the guard would not suffer the *affaire* to take place whilst we were under his charge, and it was therefore dropped till some future opportunity.

About nine o'clock the commandant entered the yard; we were regularly arranged six a-breast—the massive gates were thrown open, and we commenced our march amidst the hootings and revilings of the populace, who pressed upon us on every side, and notwithstanding every exertion of the soldiers, stones, broken bricks, and even glass bottles were hurled from the distance, doing considerable injury to many an unfortunate prisoner, and more than one or two were obliged to be carried back to the jail. It was a fine morning; showers had fallen during the night, and cleared the bright eye of heaven; the foliage looked fresh

and beautiful. Windows were filled with spectators as we passed down the streets; and thus, without shoes, stockings, jacket, or hat, I set out on a journey, the very thoughts of which were enough to appal a stouter heart than mine.

CHAPTER VI.

My last paper left me on the march from Rochefort under a strong escort, and notwithstanding the pain I suffered from walking with my feet almost bare—for I had nothing to keep them from the ground but a piece of old canvass which a good-natured seaman cut from the lower part of the legs of his trousers, and laced them round my ankles like mocassins,)—I say, notwithstanding the pain from this cause, and the apprehensions of getting a crack on the head from some missile thrown by the mob, I could not but admire the streets through which we passed for their handsome appearance, and more particularly the Great Square, which, to the best of my recollection, was nearly in the middle of the town.

At last we quitted Rochefort, and when we had gained the main-road our persecutors left us and returned back. About three miles from the town we were halted, and the officers were separated

from the men ; but at the earnest request of the men themselves, and the representations of the officers, the whole body was formed into detachments, and the officers were chosen by the men to watch over their interests during the journey. The commandant of the escort was a high-minded, honourable, and gentlemanly man, whose eye was particularly vigilant to prevent any injury or injustice being done to the prisoners.

The weather was delightfully fine, and the country through which we were passing was extremely rich and beautiful. The thick clustering grapes hung upon the vines, and the kind-hearted peasantry,—especially the women,—frequently supplied those who were nearest with luxuriant bunches of this delicious fruit, and others gave them bread. Scarcely an individual of the humbler classes but seemed desirous of testifying their humanity, and the words constantly broke with pitying accents upon our ears—"Les pauvres prisonniers!"

The conduct of the Rochefort people had, in the first instance, strongly imbittered my mind against the French generally, but the change experienced during our first day's march greatly redeemed them in my estimation. That night we halted at a small village, and there not being room enough in the prison, a great number of us were placed in a large storehouse, where clean straw was spread for us to sleep on ; and after taking some soup which one of the villagers brought me,

I fell into a sweet slumber and dreamed of home.

On the following morning, we were aroused early and separated into three divisions: the first (in which I was mustered) under Lieutenant Tomkin, marched at six o'clock, and the other two were to follow us, one at eight o'clock, the other at ten, so as to leave a distance caused by the interval of two hours each in the time of starting. Our grand escort left us here, and we had now but a few soldiers under the command of a lieutenant to guard us. This officer was well mounted, and as he had charge of the whole of the three divisions, he divided his time and presence amongst us all,—a circumstance we by no means regretted, as he was a surly and severe man,—destitute of the bowels of compassion. The sergeant over our own immediate party was of a very different character; he was strict in his discipline, and insisted upon good order being preserved,—but his efforts were unceasing to mitigate the situation in which we were placed: his aspect was of an unchanging nature, as if he had looked upon the world till all its joys or griefs had become indifferent to him: there was a something repulsive and forbidding in his countenance: but if ever man had a noble, generous, and feeling heart, it was that French sergeant. [He was a lieutenant-colonel at Waterloo.]

I had obtained a fresh supply of canvass for my feet, which were much blistered and extremely

sore; but this was soon worn out, and I suffered dreadfully. About noon we halted in the market-place of a small town bearing every mark of antiquity, (I think it was Melle,) to rest and refresh. To escape the sun I took my seat on an old tea-chest, standing in front of a huckster's shop, and removed my tattered mocassins. Whilst doing this, an elderly woman came out of the shop accompanied by a young girl, very prettily dressed, and "Pauvre garçon!"—"Pauvre prisonnier!" were uttered by both. The girl, with tears in her eyes, looked at my lacerated feet, and then without saying a word, returned to the house. In a few minutes afterwards she reappeared, but her finery had been taken off, and she carried a large bowl of warm water in her hands. In a moment, the bowl was placed before me,—she motioned me to put in my feet, which I did, and down she went upon her knees and washed them in the most tender manner. Oh, what a luxury was that half hour! The elder female brought me food, whilst the younger, having performed her office, wrapped up my feet in soft linen, and then fitted on a pair of her mother's shoes.

"Hail! woman, hail! last formed in Eden's bowers,
 'Midst humming streams and fragrance-breathing flowers:
 Thou art, 'mid light and gloom, through good and ill
 Creation's glory, man's chief blessing still!—
 Thou calm'st our thoughts, as halcyons calm the sea,
 Sooth'st in distress when servile minions flee;

15*

And oh! without thy sun-bright smiles below,
Life were a night, and earth a waste of wo."

During the process above mentioned, numbers had collected round and stood silently witnessing so angelic an act of charity. "Eulalie" heeded them not; but when her task was finished she raised her head, and a sweet smile of gratified pleasure beamed on her face. Suddenly her look was arrested, as a stout-made firm-built man caught her attention. His appearance was that of rough gentility, but there was a marked ferociousness in his countenance which excited a feeling of alarm; and it was but little softened whilst gazing on the fair child of mercy and benevolence: nevertheless, the surrounding spectators seemed to view him with distinguished respect, and numbers were uncovered in his presence. He stood with his arms folded, and when Eulalie looked at him, a smile for the moment played upon his features as he exclaimed—"Qui bien fera, bien trouvera!" and taking a chain, to which was appended a gold cross, from his neck, he threw it over her shoulders and turned away. Low and confused sounds of approbation were at first heard, but they gradually swelled louder and louder, till they burst out into loud *Vivas!* from the French, and hearty English cheers from the British. "Vive la Chouan!"—"Vive le Cadoudal!"—"Vive le Chef!"—resounded on all sides as he strode away;

and the mere casual observer would have thought he was wholly insensible to the plaudits which rung in his ears. But Mr. Tomkin noticed him with deep attention, and he afterwards told me that the piercing eye of this bold and daring man (who subsequently became so conspicuous as one of the conspirators with Pichegru against the life of Bonaparte) was restlessly keen, as if he wished to penetrate the inmost recess of every heart, and more particularly, as among the shouts was occasionally repeated—"Vive les Bourbons!"

Our guards, though much gratified at the exhibition of French humanity and gallantry, were nevertheless angry and resentful at the succeeding exclamations; and, but for the sergeant, whose manly forbearance prevented it, there would, no doubt, have been tumult. As it was, a few warm words passed; but the order was given to march, and our division quickly formed for the purpose. At parting, Eulalie threw her arms round my neck, and never were holier kisses given or received: our tears mingled together, and the most rugged natures yielded to the benign influences of tender sensibility.

Off we started again, but I was now provided with a havresac, containing white bread, some dried sausages, and several other things; my feet were well shod, and the top of an old bonnet of Eulalie's was on my head; and never will the grateful remembrances of her kindnesses be erased from my heart. Off we started, much refreshed by the

rest and the food we had obtained; and throwing off all anxious thoughts and cares of the future, the merry song and chorus, or the roar of laughter at some practical joke, frequently burst out and enlivened the march.

"I should hardly have expected," said I, addressing Mr. Tomkin, "I should hardly have expected so much generosity as we have experienced, from enemies."

"Humanity, my lad," replied he, "is the growth of no particular soil, nor indigenous to any peculiar country,—it is found every where,—but there are many actuating circumstances that tend to repress its influences, so as to brutalize the mind. I dare say the people of Rochefort, who attacked us with such deadly vengeance, were not naturally inhuman; but their passions had become inflamed by the sudden intelligence that those whom they loved "they would ne'er see again," and they gave vent to their anguish in rage against the supposed cause. The generous conduct of the peasantry, in this part of the country, arises not so much from regard to the English, as from attachment to the Bourbons, and I am much mistaken if we shall not soon experience a sensible change."

"You conceive then," said I, "that every one is naturally possessed of humanity, but is governed or guided by certain motives?"

"Come, come, my young friend," rejoined he, "we will not enter upon a disquisition of this nature; it is rather too metaphysical, and we shall

wander in its mazes till we lose ourselves. That was a delightful little girl,—Eulalie I think they called her—now, she gave a practical proof of what humanity really is. Her tenderness in washing your feet, and the ——”

“Sausages,” chimed in a young midshipman of the captured brig, “they looked delicious.”

I suspected the poor fellow had not fared so well as the rest at Melle, and therefore immediately opened my havresac and gave him a portion with some bread. It was true, I measured the sausage out rather sparingly, as a strong feeling of selfishness gave my humanity a desperate lurch to the leeward; however, he seemed very satisfied and grateful.

“You never served under him, Mr. Grummett,” said old Winchbolt, respectfully approaching us, “as I have done, and by reason o’ that ere consequence, you can’t love him as I did; thof for the matter o’ that ’ere, all on us loved him: but I’m saying, Mr. Grummett, you never sailed with him, as I have done, man and boy, for many years, if you had——” he hesitated for a moment and looked hard at the remnant of Eulalie’s bonnet,—“if you had, I wouldn’t have axed you.”

“What is it, Zach?” I inquired, “you have got a good tarpaulin hat on your head, it cannot be this old truck that you want; and if you did, Zach, I tell you honestly and candidly, I wouldn’t part with it.”

“Why, God bless you, Mr. Grummett,” replied

the veteran, "it warn't in regard of the truck I spoke, that in a shower of rain it will be like the nigger's buntin-jacket, 'soon wet, soon dry, massa;' but it warn't in regard o' that,—thof I think my tarpaulin kiver would keep out the most water, I never expected you to chop wi' me; for, if I knows any thing of young blood and young hearts, you must be thinking of the beautiful bright eyes that have twinkled under that ere straw thatch, and mayhap you means to keep it as a sort of notch in the tally of gratitude. No, nò, it warn't that, Mr. Grummett, it wur another thing."

I took off the old bonnet and examined it, and the truth flashed upon my mind at the very moment Mr. Tomkin addressed me, saying—"I believe, my young friend, I can explain old Zach's wishes."

"Ah, Lord love you, do, Mr. Tomkin," said the seaman, "pray 'splain the thing, for you can do it ship-shape, whilst I gets flustrated and flabbergasted, like a craft in the doldrums."

"Well, Zach, I'll undertake it," returned the Lieutenant, "but it is upon condition that, if successful, I shall share with you. The fact is, Mr. Grummett, you have a piece of black crape upon your head gear—I have been looking at it with rather a longing eye—but should not have said a word about it, if old Zach had not broached the subject. Respect for the memory of our late brave and excellent commander induces both of us to entertain a desire to possess and wear it,—is it not so, Zach?"

"I'm bless'd if it ar'n't, Mr. Tomkin," answered the tar. "I wants to show some momento,—as they calls it ashore,—of my reverence for him."

Without a minute's hesitation, though I must acknowledge, not without some compunction, I removed the crape and presented it to the Lieutenant. "I would not ask it, Mr. Grummett," said he, "but the quantity or the quality is nothing,"—cutting it into three slips,—“the feeling every thing,—and there is a memorial for each.”

He wound the piece he retained for himself on his left arm. I replaced mine on the old bonnet, and Zach tied his portion round his neck, and for several minutes neither of us spoke a word.

"I am heart-glad, however, Mr. Tomkin," said old Zach, "that the hooker was sensible enough to know she warn't in good hands. By the piper, but 'twas a keen trick to run her nose hard and fast on the ground, and swear she wouldn't walk a step farther. I dare say the Frenchmen were quite comflobgisticated at her obstinacy. Besides, she just hit the very amagraphy of time and place, for there warn't another spot in her way like it. Well, she's gone back to the ould country, and here we go for Wardun."

"C'est la fortune de guerre," exclaimed the French sergeant, who had been listening to the better part of our conversation, and had made out something in his imperfect knowledge of the language. "Des Anglish marchez for Verdun, les

Français allez à *Fortuné**—for dem it is unfortune malheureuse."

"I say, Zach," cried out a tar who had just been presented by a young peasant girl with a beautiful Provence rose,—“I say, Zach, will you lend the loan o’ yer nose?” Old Zach’s proboscis I have already described as being rather of a three-decker build. “Will you lend me the loan o’ yer nose, for I wants to have a good smell at this here flower, and my konk’s so small that I can ounly take it by halves.”

“That’s ’cause your wife brings it so often to the grind-stone when you’re in port,” replied Zach. And I afterwards learned this was metaphorically, though not literally, true: at all events, it silenced the joker, who made no reply.

The prediction of Mr. Tomkin, we found to our cost, was amply fulfilled; for the more we penetrated into the interior, the more rude and insulting became the inhabitants, particularly the soldiery; and though our Sergeant exerted his authority to the utmost to prevent ill-usage, yet we were frequently abused, and some of the men struck by the populace. From this charge, however, I must exculpate the women,—they generally commiserated our situation, and spoke to us with kindness. It is true, there were some who were as brutal as their male companions, but the instances were rare.

* “Forton” was the name of the French prison at Gosport.

Nothing could exceed the beauty of the country through which we passed, but its cultivation wanted that high finish which characterizes the agricultural districts of England. The peasantry, however, seemed to be extremely joyous and happy; though in the manufacturing towns there certainly did appear to be much wretchedness amongst the workmen, and a remarkable contrast in the buildings; some of which were elegant and splendid—whilst others were mere hovels, the abodes of sickly penury and pining want; at least such is the impression upon my mind, after a lapse of years, when recollection revives the scenes of our journey.

One town, the name of which I have forgotten, had a most superb bridge; and I well remember we were compelled to halt and form double files on each side of it, whilst a regiment of cavalry, admirably mounted, passed through between. The sun was pouring down his beams upon us, and the sky was so clear that it seemed like a microscopic glass collecting the rays in its focus and darting them upon our heads. But there was a sweet, refreshing, and cooling breeze came sweeping along the waters, and as we stood it played through the balustrades around our feverish temples, and came like the breath of life to the fainting spirit.

The regiment of cavalry was a remnant of the Egyptian campaign, but its numbers had been recruited and fresh mounted since its return, and the men were newly dressed, making a splendid display with their horses and equipments; and we

understood they were proceeding to the southward to keep in check a spirit of disaffection which had begun to manifest itself against the government of Napoleon, who, in addition to his unpopularity in that part of the kingdom, had caused considerable indignation by his defeats in Turkey, &c.

I have already said that the day was intensely hot and the sky clear, but towards the close of the afternoon the atmosphere grew dense and suffocating, whilst the distant thunder came rolling along the arch of heaven, and warning us of the approaching storm. So intolerable was the heat, that it was with difficulty we could drag our exhausted bodies along; and our guards laboured under the oppression as much as the prisoners. We had with great distress toiled up a steep ascent, and those who were first were ordered to wait till the rear had joined; for the party was straggling along the road, and those most behind were at least a mile and a half from the front.

Although completely toil-worn, it would have been utterly impossible to gaze upon the spectacle before us without strong feelings of wonder and delight. The altitude of the eminence we were upon was great; and though the haze was rather thick, yet we could see over an immense tract of country, where the outlines were more defined and distinct from their not being flooded with overpowering light. Vineyards and chateaux—hills and valleys—mountains and streams—rivers and forests—towns and villages; in short, there

was every thing which a painter loves to contemplate, when his imaginative genius is composing a beautiful picture, and all was in admirable keeping, whilst the dark sky upon the verge of the horizon to windward was rendered more black, as the declining sun hovered above the thickening clouds, through which his radiance could not penetrate; though, at intervals, the vivid flash from heaven's artillery flamed through the gloom, and heralded the awful sounds that none can hear and be wholly unappalled. The spectacle was grand beyond any thing I had ever witnessed; and the dread thunder came upon the ear like the voice of the Almighty, proclaiming his majesty, dominion, and power, as the Creator of all.

Sailors are naturally superstitious—they love to throw a clothing of mystery over the various celestial phenomena; yet I have seldom found one who, though listening to the thunder with awe and reverence, yet gave way to terror at its sounds. The general feeling is totally distinct from dread; and I well remember, in after-times, the observation of an old quarter-master to the Rev. Mr. Corrie, for many years the well known, and highly esteemed missionary in India. We were off the island of Ceylon, and the lightning was darting above our heads, whilst the thunder-crashes, peal on peal, shook the whole expanse, and made the very masts quiver and tremble with the concussion. Harry Mole stood at the midship binnacle conning the ship—his look was undismayed, but his head

was inclined downwards, apparently in deep thought. Mr. Corrie noticed him, and as an explosion louder than the rest seemed as it would tear the vessel to splinters, he said to the old man, "My friend, this will make the sinner tremble."

Mole looked at him—there was no smile upon his features—no attempt at effect, but his countenance showed the humble confidence of the Christian, with the intrepidity of the noble mind, as he meekly but fervently exclaimed, "Our FATHER, which art in heaven!" The manner and expression of the old man gave a new reading of the passage to the reverend clergyman, and to me it spoke volumes.

I have digressed while resting upon the hill-top; but I trust my readers will pardon me, as I believe old Mole's ideas are precisely those which seamen generally entertain. But to proceed.

In about half an hour the rear were pretty well up, and we commenced our descent into the valley. The storm, however, came rapidly upon us; the rain descended in torrents; and we were three leagues from our halting-place. In descending, a part of our road was between two craggy and lofty rocks, that formed a winding defile, as if some terrible convulsion of nature had rent them apart, and man had turned the chasm to his own advantage. But the rushing of the waters from the summits had worn deep indentations, which were speedily filled to overflowing, so that we were

actually marching instep, and not unfrequently knee deep in the streams, which was not altogether unpleasant after the dreadful heat and stifling dust we had endured.

When about half-way down, our detachment was overtaken by several officers, well mounted and wrapped up in their cloaks; and as we made way for them to pass the beautiful charger of the leader reared and plunged with alarm at the lightning: sometimes his fore-hoofs were striking fire from the rocks above his head, as he vainly essayed to spring up the almost perpendicular ascent; then would he dash from side to side, as if desirous of rushing into the very bowels of the earth; but his rider retained his seat in the most masterly manner, and seemed to provoke the animal's exertions that he might display his own superior horsemanship. His cloak had fallen loosely from his shoulder, and the rich embroidery and bullion of his uniform showed him to be of high rank, and his cocked hat was crowned with an immense plume of white ostrich-feathers, that nearly concealed the shape of the covering they were intended to ornament. The eyes of our French Sergeant sparkled with delight, and his countenance became particularly animated as he gazed upon the officer and gave him the salute, which was instantly returned with a pleasant smile as his quick eye glanced upon him, and "Eh bien, camarade—Aboukir je crois?"

"Ouis, mon Général," replied the gratified Sergeant.

"Eh bien donc, mon ami," exclaimed the officer, laughing: "à vous, le tempête est rien."

On hearing the appellation "mon Général," Mr. Tomkin bowed as the officer passed him, and the compliment was immediately answered. The general raised his hat from his head in spite of the heavy rain, the beautiful white feathers waved in the gale, and luxuriant curls, having more the appearance of art than the effect of nature, nearly surrounded features remarkably handsome, but with a look of dare-devil recklessness that bade defiance to danger. Onwards he dashed with rash impetuosity, and was followed by many congenial characters, who subsequently rendered themselves eminently conspicuous during the wild career of Napoleon's ambition, and the whole were soon lost to our view in the narrow turnings of the road.

The storm, instead of being wasted by its violence, seemed to be gathering strength, and the roaring waters came down like a rushing cataract, rendering it extremely difficult to keep our footing, and many were so completely exhausted as to render farther advance almost impossible, whilst to remain was certain death. For myself, inured from infancy to a country life, I did not suffer so severely; but it would be rank ingratitude, were I not to acknowledge the very great assistance I received from Mr. Tomkin.

When we had arrived about two-thirds down this mountain-pass, the scenery changed its character, and the dark forest towering up the

steep frowned on our right, whilst on the left was the edge of an almost perpendicular cliff, and in some places so contiguous to the road, that I could not help shuddering when I thought of the reckless horseman and his fiery steed having to approach so near to the dizzy precipice. At a break in the wood we were accosted by a peasant, who addressed the Sergeant, and stated that "he was ordered to wait there till the detachment came down, and also that he was hired by the General to conduct us to a place of shelter."

"Monsieur le Général n'a pas son semblable," said the Sergeant, "il est incomparable;" and he turned off to the right, beneath the umbrageous foliage of the trees, whose spreading branches darkened the path-way so as to render it scarcely perceptible, except when the lightning with its fierce blaze illuminated the whole expanse of heaven and earth. Word had been speedily passed through the detachment that shelter was at hand; and the prospect of rest cheered the drooping spirits of those who were rapidly sinking under fatigue. In a short time after quitting the main road we came to a ridge of rocks, over which our guide rapidly passed, and called upon us to follow. We immediately obeyed; but the instantaneous glare of immense furnaces vomiting forth their brilliant flames so dazzled the sight that I was compelled to turn away, the suddenness of the spectacle causing no small degree of astonishment, and I must confess creating a

feeling of alarm, especially as their use was then unknown to me. Having conquered the fierceness of the light, I descended into an immense cavern, where a dozen fires were vividly burning; and the persons who attended them stripped to the waist, reflected the red hue of the blaze, and seemed like demons preparing a place of torment for our reception.

Some of the seamen at first would not enter, imagining they had reached the confines of Tartarus, or had got to the grand *arch-way* to the infernal regions, whilst others boldly rushed in, determined to set his satanic majesty at defiance, and dry their well saturated garments by his kitchen fire.

"I'm —— if there ar'n't plenty of cooks," cried one. "Ould Bellzebug is going to have a *shivo*," said another—"I don't care how soon he pipes to dinner," exclaimed a third—"We shall have it hot and warm, at all events," added a fourth; whilst a fifth brought all to a climax, by declaring "He was hungry enough to eat a couple of young imps half-roasted, half-raw."

"They are smelting ore," said Mr. Tomkin; at all events a good fire is not a bad thing such an evening as this, even though we may be placed upon short allowance of grub."

I cordially assented to this, and was approaching one of the furnaces, when the guide directed us to another part of the cavern, as that in which we were to take up our quarters; it was pleasant-

ly warm, and numbers stretched themselves upon the rocky ground in their wet clothes; but the Sergeant immediately aroused them, and they were sent, by small parties at a time, to wring out the water and dry their duds; and when this was completed, two whole sheep and sundry pieces of beef, smoking hot from the furnaces, were laid on clean boards before us, with a sack of bread; and the knives were quickly employed in the work of dissection. Brandy was moderately, but claret was plentifully, supplied; and as one and all declared they had quite water enough for one day, very little of either spirits or wine was diluted.

As soon as our supper was finished, we began inquiring of each other how it could have happened that we should fare so well, for it was evident we were expected guests, and busy conjecture went to work to try and puzzle it out. Some attributed it to necromancy; others swore they were *enchanted*; whilst a few contentedly satisfied their minds that they had supped at Old Nick's table, and therefore cheerfully drank "*his honour's*" health. The mystery, however, was soon explained; for previous to our lying down, the general who had passed us on the road came, surrounded by his *suite*, from an inner recess in the cavern, and certainly I had never before seen so noble and commanding a figure. He was tall in stature, but his height was greatly increased by the lofty white plumes above his head—his martial look, his firm step, and proud demeanour, were

admirably borne out by the superb dress he wore, and his handsome countenance seemed to be beaming with satisfaction at having made the "poor prisoners" happy—for it was to him we were indebted for our shelter and repast. I thought to myself, if ever nature made a king, this man's brows ought to be encircled with a regal diadem. Alas! in after years he became a monarch over a degraded nation, destitute of courage and abandoned in principle. He lost his throne, and the hero whom death had surrounded in a hundred battles, fell at the place of public execution. Ah, how often, when I have recalled his manly and handsome features to my recollection—how often have I thought of his last words to the soldiers who were drawn up to despatch him—"Save my *face*—aim at my heart—fire!" It was Joachim Murat.

With the most perfect affability he entered into conversation with Mr. Tomkin; praised the English as a brave nation—spoke of Napoleon with enthusiasm, and expressed a fervent wish that England and France united might give laws to the world. The Lieutenant smiled at his earnestness, and looked a little doubtful as to its sincerity; he, however, made no reply upon that subject, but spoke of the other two detachments that were on the march, one at least of which must then be exposed to the weather. The General answered, "he had already provided for that—the rearmost detachment would halt at the last town we left,

and the centre one he expected every moment."

Scarcely had this been communicated to the other prisoners, when we heard a loud cheer, truly British, outside the cavern, which was immediately responded to by those within, and the centre detachment, in a pitiable condition, made their appearance; up sprang our party. Cordial greetings and warm congratulations passed on both sides; for the few days we had been separated seemed an age; we had travelled over many a weary mile from the place where we first left them, and now we had again met unexpectedly, though, to the seamen accustomed to the rough tempest, not altogether without pleasure.

It was a curious spectacle to witness the welcomes of the tars to each other: there was no shaking of hands, but a grip of the arm, or a hearty slap on the back, accompanied their "What cheer, messmate? what cheer?" and offers of instant assistance were tendered.

Murat looked on with seeming pleasure; and as he conversed with the officers of his *suite*, he occasionally pointed out particular parties of seamen who might well be considered the pride and boast of England's naval pre-eminence, as they lent one another a helping hand, and as children of the battle and the storm manifested their strong fraternal regard.

The fresh arrival underwent the same process of drying as the first detachment; a plentiful store

of provision was then spread out—the grog and wine were once more set abroach, and, weary as we all were, no one thought of sleep. The fires burned warmly and brightly (there was no lack of atmospheric heat;) the *stuff* that maketh glad the heart of man produced its full effect; and there they all sat upon the rocky floor, toasting “Here’s to our friends at home,” and singing old galley-songs; and perhaps never before had that cavern, and probably has never since, echoed more loudly to the strains of mirth—certainly I should think in no case under similar circumstances.

The tempest raged, the thunder rolled, the lightnings flashed without; but within all was cheerfulness and gaiety; and Jack, with his usual forgetfulness of the past, thought only of present enjoyment, leaving the future to turn out as it would; yet we were all prisoners.

I was much gratified to find my friend Jennings in good health; and we sat conversing together upon past events; and here it was, at my particular request, he gave me the following brief outline of his history:

“I must, first of all, tell you, Mr. Grummett, that the name of Jennings, under which I pass, is an assumed one; what my real name is can be of no material consequence to any body; the time may come that I shall again resume it, and then as far as it can be traced back, it will be found without a blemish or a stain.

“I was the youngest and only surviving child

out of a large family; my parents enjoyed a handsome competency—they lived respectably, kept several servants; and I never can remember a single instance of a tradesman having to call a second time to obtain the settling of his account. I was aware, however, that the right to a considerable portion of the property was disputed, and had been under litigation for several years; but so firmly was I convinced from childhood of my father's rectitude of principle, that I inquired but little into it, being fully satisfied that he would never knowingly lend himself to a dishonourable action. The premature decease of both brothers and sisters, and my being in some degree the child of their old age, rendered me an object of unbounded indulgence, and with the heedlessness of youth I launched into extravagances which, I have since discovered, greatly tended to diminish their income, already circumscribed by heavy law expenses. From childhood my earnest desire was to join the army, and become a soldier; the wish 'grew with my growth, and strengthened with my strength;' and, after repeated discussions on the subject—sometimes tenderly persuasive, at others with warmth and anger—my father purchased me a commission as ensign in a regiment of the line, which, in one fortnight after I had joined it, was ordered out to the West Indies.

"I need not tell *you*, Mr. Grummett, of the keen anguish that attends parting from the authors of your existence. I am true, hope may unfurl the

bright banner of enterprise to the fair breeze of expectation, yet the thought of never meeting again, together with a thousand nameless indescribable anticipations, spread their dark pinions and eclipse the gorgeous sun-light of ambition, that would dazzle the imagination with its glorious splendour. Parting, Mr. Grummett, is painful reality, and mocks the romantic fervour of the fancy.

“But there was one besides my parents from whom I was to be separated—a gentle and amiable girl a few years younger than myself*—in fact, my present wife. She was the orphan daughter of a Major Godfrey, who died in the East Indies, and had left a handsome fortune in that country to his child. Whatever it was, however, only a small portion reached England, and my affectionate and tender mother had taken the orphan to reside with her. Our hearts had grown together—we loved each other most devotedly, and our attachment was founded on the strong basis of mutual respect as well as esteem. We solemnly pledged our troth, conscious that the eye of the great Judge of quick and dead was upon us. It was not in a temple made with hands, nor before an altar of man’s invention, but the spot was hal-

* There appears to be a discrepancy here, as I have stated in my first paper that the age of Mrs. Jennings was between nineteen and twenty. In fact, however, she was older than she appeared to be—her age, at the time of his relating his history, was twenty-three, that of Jennings twenty-seven.—F. G.

lowed as the creation of the Deity, and the altar was consecrated by his own handiworks. The green earth, teeming with the bounteous stores of Providence was our holy place, and the sparkling stars, brilliantly shining in God's own firmament, were the undying witnesses of the compact."

Here Jennings paused a few seconds, as if remembrance had overpowered him; he then passed his hand quickly across his brow, his countenance resumed its firmness, and he went on.

"Well, Mr. Grummett, the regiment embarked, and after a voyage of no great interest we arrived at our destination in Carlisle Bay, Barbadoes, and from thence we went with the expedition against San Lucie; and I served under General Moore at the attack upon Morne Chabot, and was one of the storming-party at Morne Fortunée, where I received a severe wound. General Moore was pleased to speak favourably of my conduct on both occasions, and I was honoured by the notice of Sir Ralph Abercombie, and was promoted to a lieutenancy. But my wound, and ill-health produced by over-exertion, compelled me to return home. I reluctantly applied—the application was granted—and after an absence of two years I again landed on British soil.

"During my stay in the West Indies I had held constant correspondence with my family; and though the letters of Amelia sometimes excited a suspicion that affairs were not in the best condition, yet I could never find any thing on which to

ground the most distant supposition of distress. Judge of my anguish, then, on going down to the home of my infancy and boyhood, intending to surprise my friends by my sudden presence, I found the residence occupied by other tenants, and heard a tale that overwhelmed me with misery. The law-suit in which my father had been involved for so many years was decided against him; he had been obliged to quit the spot where he had passed nearly the whole of his life; and the old age of my parents was doomed, if not to actual want, at least to the bitterness of poverty, compared with their former condition.

“I was soon made sensible that the sum paid for my commission and outfit, and the allowance necessary to maintain my rank as an officer, had lessened the little capital of my father, who, with my mother and Amelia, had retired to a small cottage in a distant village, and thither I repaired.

“I shall pass by our meeting, merely saying, that the change of circumstances had wrought fearful havoc on my father’s mind, which was fast sinking into imbecility; whilst my poor mother, almost heart-broken, was incapable of leading him to that consolation which is the best and surest in every time of need and difficulty. Amelia had attended them (for they kept but one servant) with dutiful affection; she had devoted the whole of her little property to their increasing wants, but there were yet heavy demands to be satisfied for law expenses.

"I had not been under the roof of my parents four-and-twenty hours, when agitation of mind produced a violent inflammation of my partly-healed wound, and in a few hours more I was in a strong delirious fever. Day after day passed by, and I still remained unconscious, and when I recovered my reason I found another and more trying change had taken place: my aged father had been arrested—former acquaintances had been applied to for the purpose of procuring bail; but it is a cautious world, Mr. Grummett, and as old Harvey would say, 'the rats always quit a sinking ship'—so that no bail could be obtained, and he was consigned to a prison.

"At first I was undecided how to act—whether to retain my commission, and by the pay, small as it was, contributing to the comforts of my mother, or by selling out, to obtain my father's liberation, though absolute penury would be the result. However, I soon fixed upon the latter, trusting to Providence for a restoration of health, which would enable me to do something to keep us from starving.

"I sold out, and the proceeds restored my father to his dying wife. The shock of his going to prison had been too much for my poor mother, and after lingering a short time between the love of life and the depths of the grave, she expired in the arms of her gray-haired partner, exhorting him to follow quickly to the promised rest of the Christian.

“The Psalmist says, Mr. Grummett, ‘the heart knoweth its own bitterness;’ and truly did I find mine almost more than I could bear. After the interment of my mother, I placed my father, now almost in a state of helplessness, with a widow who had known affliction, and had in former times experienced his generous sympathy. Amelia was received among her father’s relatives; but it was galling to my soul when I ascertained that she was kept in a state of menial dependence, from which I then had no possibility of rescuing her.

“Oh how fervently did I petition Heaven for health and strength, that by daily labour I might increase the comforts of my father! The God of Mercy heard my prayer and answered it—my wound completely healed—sickness departed—I became robust and vigorous, and entered upon humbling, though not degrading toil.

“I know, Mr. Grummett, that persons who are reduced from their accustomed station in society but too frequently suffer their intellects and habits to sink down to a level with their circumstances, and perhaps, in some cases, even below that. For myself, I was determined from the first never to lose sight of what I had been; and though my occupation and rank might be humble, my mind should still retain its proper elevation. The Almighty aided me, and no arm but his could have sustained me through the many trials I underwent.

“Still my spirit yearned to be in the army and

amongst my gallant comrades, fighting the battles of my country. The death of my father released me from the obligation which nature had bound upon me not to leave him whilst life remained, and when I had laid his perishing remains by the side of my departed mother, I enlisted in the —, resolved to use every effort to rise in the profession.

“Amelia was aware of my intention, but she did not attempt to dissuade me from it, and we cheered ourselves with the prospect of brighter days, when a union of hands should consummate the bond which held our hearts. Amelia, however, desirous of sparing me farther present pain, forbore to tell me that she was suffering under persecution from her relatives, because she refused to listen to the addresses of a wealthy suitor, who made her an offer of marriage. This fact came to my knowledge, through the information of a discarded servant of the family with whom she resided. I lost no time in assuring myself of its truth, and having obtained a furlough, I repaired to the scene of action. The persecution had been carried beyond what I could have anticipated: Amelia was wretched; and leaving the prospect of grandeur and riches, she became the wife of the poor, but I will add, honest corporal, (for I had already gained that first step.) She was immediately cast adrift by her *friends*; but in each other’s warm affection we found a full compensation for all.

“I had foreseen the probability of being ordered

upon foreign service, but never contemplated that its probability was so soon to be accomplished. The route, however, came, and the certainty of its purport descended like a heavy blow upon my heart. There was the chance of my wife accompanying me, but it was only a chance; I therefore wrote to her relatives, imploring them to give her countenance and shelter, should that last hope fail. They were inexorable, and declared their purpose of abandoning her to her fate, however wretched it might be. Oh, Mr. Grummet, I cannot tell you what I suffered! I felt, myself sunk, indeed. Of my embarkation and other particulars, you have been an eye-witness; and believe me, at this moment, anxious as my mind must naturally be, I am far more happy than if I had left my wife amongst those whose tender mercies were very cruelty. But come, sir, I see that the men are composing themselves to sleep, and we shall both want rest for to-morrow's march. Good night, Mr. Grummett—good night, sir;—remember in every trouble that may assail you this maxim—it was a favourite one of my father's, and I have experienced its truth—'He who eyes a Providence will never want a Providence to eye.' Good night, sir—good night."

Jennings stretched himself out, turned away on his side, and shortly afterwards was in a sound slumber. His history had frequently beguiled me of my tears, and his last counsel prompted me to unfold the workings of my heart in fervent prayer

to my Maker. I then laid myself down, and my frame was gradually overpowered by calm, refreshing sleep.

Oh, how delightedly did I wander among the scenes of my childhood!—how fondly was I caressed by my parents, who welcomed my return!—how proudly did I show myself and my honourable scars to my old companions! and my troubles were only remembered to enhance my joys. In the midst of my felicity an enemy appeared; I was charged with having deserted my duty; and even before the eyes of my parents, an officer of the law grasped me by the collar to drag me away to prison. Stung by the insult, I aroused myself—pshaw! it was only a dream—and the officer of the law, in the dress of a French soldier, had shaken me roughly by the shoulder to awaken me from sleep.

CHAPTER VII.

THE bright and glorious beams of day lighted up the entrance to the cavern. The night of tempest had been succeeded by a lovely morning, and I was walking towards the ascent for the purpose of looking out, but was commanded by the sentry to stop, in a voice and manner of harshness and severity. The French sergeant witnessed it, but did not rebuke him; indeed, he seemed to partake of the sentry's feelings, and I was about to address him, but he turned away in anger.

"I am sorry to say, Mr. Grummett," said Jennings, who joined me at the moment, "that our last night's entertainment has been repaid by ingratitude: two of the Asia's are missing, and the guard will be blamed for their escape."

"But surely," replied I, "it is not justice to punish those who remain for the conduct of the men who have gone off?"

"The sergeant has just discovered the loss," re-

turned Jennings, "and being naturally vexed and sore at it, he looks with suspicion upon every one; but if I know any thing of a noble spirit—which he most undoubtedly possesses—this humour will not last long, although we must expect our freedom to be still farther abridged."

And so we found it: for the sergeant who had hitherto placed great confidence in us, by the indiscreet conduct of the runaways, was induced to keep a more watchful eye; and thus, as in numerous other instances, the innocent suffered for the guilty.

After partaking of the remnants of the evening repast, we emerged from the cavern, and the romantic nature of the scenery was truly gratifying to behold. I have seen many places that have delighted and astonished me, but no spot ever exceeded this in the wild, the wonderful, and the beautiful. In passing through the forest, the effects of the lightning were plainly visible on the scathed branches of the trees and the changing colour of the leaves. When we once more gained the main road, the view from the summit of the cliffs I have before mentioned was highly picturesque and grand. The heavy rains had in many places overflowed the rivers and tributary streams, and the vale was nearly inundated; whilst the waters rolled and foamed along in their descent towards the sea, offering a strong contrast to the quiet of the green fields and the luxuriant vineyards glowing in the morning sun.

When we reached the banks of the river it was found to be impassable, and we were again compelled to halt for several hours; and here the third detachment joined us, and with them, handcuffed together, were the two deserters: they had been picked up by the peasantry, and delivered to the detachment on its march. There were but few, if any, who commiserated their situation; and they were compelled to keep entirely by themselves, so as to hold no intercourse with the other prisoners.

The invention of British seamen soon contrived floats, and after some considerable delay we all got safe over, though not without numerous accidents, alarming at the moment, but so ludicrous in their nature as to cause unbounded laughter when safety was ensured.

That evening we were stopt at a village, which I had heard described as being particularly pretty and rural. On our arrival there was scarce a trace of it to be seen: the flood had swept nearly the whole of it away; its former inhabitants were wandering like restless spirits round the ruins of their once pleasant homes, and there was no vestige of a place of shelter.

The three detachments (now imbodyed into one) were drawn up into a compact form, and the lieutenant of the guard was much puzzled how to act, the next station being at least three leagues' distant, and another swollen river to pass. In this dilemma Mr. Tomkin proposed that the prisoners

should assist the villagers in erecting a temporary shed for the night from the wrecks of the cottages, as well also to aid them in collecting their scattered goods and chattles. The lieutenant of the guard demurred for some time; but Mr. Tomkin addressed the prisoners, pointing out to them the impossibility of escape, and evidencing the two who had been recaptured to prove his assertion. In language peculiarly suited to their understandings and feelings, he impressed upon their minds, that any attempt to get away would be visited with great rigour upon those who remained; and he appealed to their generosity to act like men.

The lieutenant of the guard took Mr. Tomkin's word, and in a few minutes the whole of the prisoners (except the deserters, who were confined under the charge of a sentry) were scattered in all directions; and with the characteristic humanity of our brave tars, they cheerfully set to work. In a very short time, by dint of perseverance, a comfortable place of shelter was erected, and a great quantity of furniture and other property which the seamen had collected was brought in. A large fire was lighted, and though we were without food, yet the night was passed as pleasantly as circumstances would admit. No sooner had daylight streaked the eastern sky with its glowing tints, than the prisoners again set to work, and seemed to vie with each other in labouring to render the villagers assistance. In the course of two or three hours some of the cottages were ren-

dered tenantable, and we left the spot amidst the blessings and gratitude of these poor people.

Many curious incidents occurred during the remainder of our march to Verdun, which we reached by the latter end of September; and through the exertions of Mr. Tomkin I was placed upon *parole* as one of the midshipmen of the *Blaze-away* and had no cause to complain of my quarters, where I was very kindly treated by the worthy couple and their family with whom I resided.

Our stay at Verdun, however, was but short. The 1st of October brought forth the preliminaries of peace. Ample funds had been transmitted to me by my father, (who expressed his great gratification at the character given of me by Lord Amelius Beaumscratch, and prophesied that I should one day or another become a commander-in-chief;) and in the course of a few months I was once more under the roof of my parents, enjoying the smiles of affection, and the praises of the fair. And thus ended MY FIRST TRIP.

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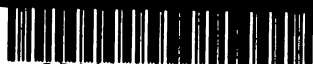
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